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THE BOOKSELLERS' LEAGUE



THE  
BOOKSELLERS' LEAGUE

A HISTORY OF ITS FORMATION  
AND TEN YEARS OF ITS WORK



NEW YORK  
THE BOOKSELLERS' LEAGUE

1905



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# *Prefatory Note*

*This sketch was written to fulfill a promise made some years ago to trace the history of The Booksellers' League from its beginning to the present time, for the information of those who have associated themselves with our organization within recent years, as well as for those who may contemplate becoming members. May the recital of the early struggles and ambitions of the founders ever inspire the younger candidate to still better work for the League and for the trade which we love and honor.*

A. G.





This work is dedicated  
to  
EVERY BOOKSELLER EVERYWHERE  
who believes in good fellowship  
and in elevating his calling  
to the dignity of a  
profession



# THE BOOKSELLERS' LEAGUE

## THE BEGINNINGS

BEFORE THE BOOKSELLERS' LEAGUE was called into existence, in 1894, the book-trade held a unique position among the trades of the United States in that it lacked organization of any kind. While even its allied branches—the stationers, printers and bookbinders—had combined for defensive as well as offensive action, and to bring its individual members into closer fellowship, socially, the members of the book-trade, with a strange fatality, chose to remain separate individuals, every one for himself; indeed, it almost seemed as though each individual member of the booktrade strove to keep as far as possible apart from his associates. When on the occasion of the death of this or that leading member of the trade, some of his *confrères*, for once deferring to convention, stood about his coffin, it was frequently found that but few of them had ever looked upon his face before.

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To few of those who stood about the departed had he been a companion or comrade; to the rest he was, probably, simply a competitor, a stranger excepting in name. When vital questions confronted the trade, each individual solved them independently—in his own way, or, more often, ignored them altogether until the evils that arose from such neglect threatened to choke the life out of his business; and then only he resorted to a remedy which in almost every case was but feebly effective, because, through his very isolation, he was unable to calculate its effect in the widest sense. It took the booktrade from the spring of 1877, when the American Booktrade Association dwindled into desuetude, until the fall of 1900—nearly a generation—to realize that two men together could lift a load that neither one could move; that the united counsel of a body of masters of any trade would be more certain to devise a mode of action that would prove more effective and cover more points than could possibly occur to the mind of one man; and that a closer acquaintance would often soften a decision, or make unnecessary an act that must seem uncalled for, if not harsh, when committed at long range by strangers not fully acquainted with all the facts bearing on the case. That many golden opportunities for building up and extending and strengthening the booktrade during this period were neglected, or, perforce, allowed to



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slip away altogether, and that the whole trade lost heavily in prestige as well as in income, will be denied by none who has felt the beneficent influence thus far exerted by the publishers and booksellers' associations, though both of these organizations still have many problems to solve and many difficulties to overcome before their influence on trade conditions can become as marked and powerful as it must become to enable the booktrade to become the potent factor in the community that it deserves to be.

Singularly, while the principles in the trade stood aloof, the rank and file was always more or less alive to the advantages afforded by closer organization, and, though ineffectually, put forth several efforts to enlarge the opportunities for more frequent intercourse. As usual, what was considered to be everyone's work finally became no one's work, and so the various propositions for creating social organizations generally ended in talk. At last one individual quietly circulated a call for a meeting of the employees of the booktrade, and the result was the organizing of the Booksellers' and Stationers' Provident Association, in Leavitt's Trade Salesroom in Clinton Hall, New York, in April, 1879. This association, of which the existence was due solely to the efforts of Joseph H. Vogelius, during the eighteen years of its activity paid out \$140,000, in amounts of from \$198 to \$1,000 each, to 154 beneficiaries.

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Its wreck in the end was due more to the scare started by the sensational reports of a yellow trade journal than to the large assessments due to the unusual number of deaths in a few months. Its life might have been prolonged for some years, perhaps indefinitely; but the plans under consideration for the continuance of the Association would have necessitated expenses not necessary under the old administration, and would also have considerably reduced its death benefits; and so it was allowed to dwindle away until its final dissolution in August, 1903.

Early in the career of the Booksellers' and Stationers' Provident Association a number of its members felt the necessity of a still closer association than the scope of that organization afforded, and two propositions were made at two different annual meetings—the Association met but once a year—to add a social feature to its order of business. But, as the president, Mr. Charles T. Dillingham, pertinently pointed out, the Booksellers' and Stationers' Association was definitely chartered as a provident institution, and could not be extended along the lines proposed without a reorganization. The matter was therefore allowed to drop. Again and again the subject of a social organization was agitated, but no one seemed willing to take the initiative. A year or two after the matter was proposed for the second time at the annual meeting of the Book-

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sellers' and Stationers' Provident Association, Charles A. Burkhardt circulated a call among the employees of the booktrade to consider the feasibility of organizing a booksellers' and stationers' social league. Mr. Burkhardt's enthusiasm soon persuaded upwards of one hundred booksellers and members of the allied trades to agree to launch such an organization.

In December, 1894, a dozen or twenty of the representatives of the trade met at the office of Henry Holt & Co., 29 W. 23d Street, New York, to arrange for the organization of the Booksellers' and Stationers' League and to draft a constitution and by-laws. At last, on the evening of February 9, 1895, during a wild rain and snow storm, about thirty members of the book and stationery trade met in a hall on the top floor of 117 West Twenty-third Street, New York—in the building once occupied by Koster & Bial, but now euphoniously called the Gramercy Lyceum—to ratify the work of the organizing committee and to take action to call The Booksellers' League into official existence. Mr. J. N. Wing, of Charles Scribner's Sons, was appointed temporary chairman, A. Growoll, of *The Publishers' Weekly*, temporary secretary, and C. E. Savage, of G. P. Putnam's Sons, temporary treasurer.

Mr. Wing, after these preliminaries had been settled, called the attention of the meeting to the fact that 125 names had been promptly signed to

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the original prospectus of The Booksellers' League (first named The Booksellers' and Stationers' League, but abbreviated to avoid confusing the new organization with the older Booksellers' and Stationers' Provident Association), which, so far as he was aware, was the first attempt in this country to call those employed in the book and stationery trades together to enjoy themselves socially. While this was the first object of the projectors of the League, he hoped that in time its scope would be widened and that it might be instrumental in elevating the standard of clerks in the professions with which the members of the League are connected. He for one was of the opinion that, as the field of the bookseller was year by year becoming more limited, so that he was less able to pull up his stakes and try his fortunes in a new and growing community, it was also becoming more and more necessary that he get the proper instruction and develop to the fullest extent his knowledge of his profession; the time therefore seemed ripe for an organization that would offer the means for mutual protection and advancement, as well as provide education through lectures and practical instruction by acknowledged masters; and he hoped that the Booksellers' League which those present were about to call into life might be developed along these lines.

The secretary then read the constitution, which,

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with the exception of a few minor changes, was adopted :

### CONSTITUTION.\*

#### ARTICLE I.

##### *Name.*

*Sec. I.*—The name of this Society shall be THE BOOK-SELLERS' LEAGUE.

*Sec. II.*—The headquarters of the League shall be in the City of New York.

#### ARTICLE II.

##### *Objects.*

The objects of the League are the cultivation of fraternal relations between its members, and the furthering of the interests of their respective callings in such manner as the League may from time to time decide.

#### ARTICLE III.

##### *Membership.*

Persons over eighteen years of age, of good moral character, connected with the book and stationery trades, and associate branches, and such other persons as the Board of Managers may deem proper to admit, may become members.

#### ARTICLE IV.

##### *Dues.*

*Sec. I.*—The dues shall be at the rate of \$5 per year, payable semi-annually in advance, on the first days of April and October.

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\* The Constitution as here printed is that revised and amended March 9, 1901.



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*Sec. II.*—All applications for membership should be accompanied with \$5 in payment of the first annual dues in advance, and no person shall be considered as having qualified for membership until the first year's dues are paid.

*Sec. III.*—Any member who shall be in arrears for dues for more than six weeks will be suspended from all participation in the meetings of the League. Any member in arrears for more than six months shall be considered as having withdrawn from the League, and the Board of Managers shall order his name stricken from the roll of membership.

### ARTICLE V.

#### *Officers.*

The officers of the League shall be a President, a First Vice-President, a Second Vice-President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer.

They shall hold office for one year and until their successors are elected.

Only persons directly connected with the book and stationery trades, or associate branches, shall be elected to any office in the League.

### ARTICLE VI.

#### *President.*

*Sec. I.*—The President shall preside at all meetings of the League, and of the Board of Managers.

He may at any time call a special meeting of the League, and it shall be his duty to call special meetings of the League whenever at least 25 members shall in writing request him to do so.

*Sec. II.*—If for any reason the President shall be unable to act, his duties shall be performed by the First Vice-President. If the First Vice-President should be

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unable to act, the duties of the President shall be performed by the Second Vice-President.

*Sec. III.*—The President shall, with the Secretary, sign all written contracts and obligations of the League.

He shall perform such other duties as the Board of Managers may assign to him.

The President shall be *ex-officio* a member of all committees.

### ARTICLE VII.

#### *Secretary.*

The Secretary shall mail notices of all meetings of the Board of Managers, and shall keep minutes of all meetings of the League and of the Board of Managers. He shall conduct the correspondence of the League, and shall have charge of all papers and documents.

### ARTICLE VIII.

#### *Treasurer.*

*Sec. I.*—The Treasurer shall collect all dues and moneys owing to the League, and shall deposit the same in such bank as may be designated by the Board of Managers.

*Sec. II.*—He shall disburse moneys only in payment of such bills as have been authorized or approved of by the Board of Managers.

*Sec. III.*—He shall keep the accounts of the League and report thereon at each regular meeting of the Board of Managers.

*Sec. IV.*—He shall mail all notices of the meetings of the League.

*Sec. V.*—He shall notify persons elected to membership of their election, and shall certify to the Secretary the names of all newly elected members as soon as they shall have paid their dues.

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*Sec. VI.*—He shall furnish, at the expense of the League, bonds of such amount as the Board of Managers may direct, endorsed by a responsible security company.

*Sec. VII.*—At the expiration of his term of office he shall submit to the Board of Managers, in writing, a final report with vouchers, together with such moneys of the League, and bank books, as may be in his possession.

### ARTICLE IX.

#### *Board of Managers.*

*Sec. I.*—There shall be a Board of Managers, consisting of 18 members.

They shall have general charge, management, and control of the affairs, funds, and property of the League, and shall authorize and control all expenditures.

*Sec. II.*—They shall have full power; but it shall be their duty to carry out the aims and objects of the League in accordance with the letter and spirit of this Constitution.

*Sec. III.*—At the first meeting of the League held, a President and 18 members of a Board of Managers shall be elected by ballot. The members of the Board, irrespective of the President, shall divide their number into three classes of 6 members each, and the term of office of these classes shall be respectively one, two, and three years, and until their successors are elected.

*Sec. IV.*—Thereafter at each Annual Meeting of the League, a President, and 6 managers to replace the outgoing 6, shall be elected by ballot, and their term of office shall be three years and until their successors are elected. In such elections a majority of the votes cast shall be necessary to elect.

*Sec. V.*—Vacancies that shall occur in any class shall be immediately filled by the Board for the unexpired term.

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*Sec. VI.*—The Board of Managers as soon as may be after each Annual Meeting shall elect from its own members a First Vice-President, a Second Vice-President, a Secretary and a Treasurer.

*Sec. VII.*—The Board of Managers shall at each Annual Meeting submit in writing a general report of the affairs of the League, together with the report of the Treasurer for the past year, and an estimate for the coming year.

*Sec. VIII.*—The Board of Managers shall hold monthly meetings, except during the months of June, July, August and December.

Special meetings may be called at any time by the President.

Six Managers shall constitute a quorum.

*Sec. IX.*—Any member who shall be absent from three consecutive meetings of the Board, without being excused, shall be deemed as having tendered his resignation as Manager.

*Sec. X.*—The Board of Managers shall prepare and enforce rules regulating the League rooms.

The Board shall also prescribe rules for the admission of strangers to the privileges of the League rooms.

*Sec. XI.*—The Board shall have power to make rules for its own government, and to prescribe and enforce penalties for violating them.

*Sec. XII.*—The Board shall pass and vote upon all applications for membership. Three negative votes shall suffice for the rejection of a candidate.

*Sec. XIII.*—All members who have withdrawn from the League, and desire to be reinstated, must make application for membership and be elected under the rules prescribed for new members in Section XII.

*Sec. XIV.*—The Board of Managers shall have the power, by a two-thirds vote, to expel any member of the League, whose membership may be for any cause preju-

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cial to the interests of the League, provided charges shall have been made in writing and a hearing afforded to the offending member before the Board of Managers.

### ARTICLE X.

#### *Meetings.*

*Sec. I.*—There shall be an Annual Meeting of the League which shall be held early in February, for the purpose of electing officers and for the transacting of such other business as may come before it. Meetings of the League shall also be held monthly, except during the months of June, July, August and December.

*Sec. II.*—The Board of Managers may at any time, and the President shall upon the written request of at least 25 members, call a special meeting of the League, which request, as also the notice of any special meeting, shall state the object for which the meeting is called. At special meetings no subject not so stated in the notice shall be considered.

*Sec. III.*—Notices of all meetings of the League shall be mailed at least three days before each meeting, to all members at their addresses given in the Treasurer's books.

*Sec. IV.*—Twenty members shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the League; but no amendment to the Constitution shall be considered at which less than twenty-five members are present.

*Sec. V.*—No person not a member of the League shall be present at any business meeting of the League.

### ARTICLE XI.

#### *Committees.*

*Sec. I.*—There shall be the following committees:

1. A Membership Committee.



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2. An Entertainment Committee.
3. A Finance and Auditing Committee.
4. A Printing Committee.

*Sec. II.*—All committees shall be appointed by the President, with the advice and consent of the Board of Managers, as soon as may be after the Annual Meeting in each year.

Each committee shall consist of three or more members, one of whom—the chairman—shall be a member of the Board of Managers.

*Sec. III.*—The Board of Managers may create, and the President, with the advice and consent of the Board, appoint such other committees as may be deemed necessary.

*Sec. IV.*—Members of any committee may be removed from office at a meeting of the Board of Managers.

### *Membership Committee.*

*Sec. V.*—The Membership Committee shall investigate such applications for membership as may be presented to them by the Board of Managers, to be reported on at the next meeting of the Board. They shall also serve as an Introduction Committee at meetings of the League.

### *Entertainment Committee.*

*Sec. VI.*—The Entertainment Committee shall provide for addresses, lectures or essays, or for suitable musical, literary or other entertainment for each of the monthly meetings of the League.

### *Finance and Auditing Committee.*

*Sec. VII.*—The Finance and Auditing Committee shall audit the accounts of the Treasurer annually, and report to the Board of Managers.

This Committee may also act as a Finance Committee,

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with such powers and duties as the Board of Managers may prescribe.

### *Printing Committee.*

*Sec. VIII.*—The Printing Committee shall have charge of all the printing for the League and for the Board of Managers. They shall have the care of all cuts or engraved plates, keeping a careful record of the same. Such property is to be handed over to their successors in office.

*Sec. IX.*—The committee shall incur no indebtedness except such as shall be authorized by the Board of Managers.

## ARTICLE XII.

### *Employment Bureau.*

There shall be conducted under the auspices of the League an Employment Bureau, the use of which shall be free to all members. A nominal charge, however, shall be made for securing situations to such persons as are not members of the League.

## ARTICLE XIII.

### *Amendments.*

This Constitution may be amended at any Regular Meeting of the League by a two-thirds vote of the members present. Notices of proposed amendments shall be furnished to the Secretary at least 30 days before the meeting at which it is proposed to consider them, and the Secretary shall cause copies of such proposed amendments to be sent to each member with the notices of meeting, at least 20 days before such meeting.

The meeting then proceeded to elect a president and a board of managers. Mr. J. N. Wing was

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the sole candidate for the presidency, and his choice was unanimous, the secretary being instructed to cast one ballot. The following were elected members of the Board of Managers:

J. B. Brigham	with The Baker & Taylor Co.
John Briggs	" The American Book Co.
F. Bruce	" Macmillan & Co.
Charles A. Burkhardt	" E. P. Dutton & Co.
C. E. Butler	" Brentano's.
J. B. Carrington	" Charles Scribner's Sons.
J. W. Corrigan	" G. P. Putnam's Sons.
Charles T. Dillingham,	766 Broadway.
M. A. Dominick	" Frederick A. Stokes & Co.
A. Growoll	" <i>The Publishers' Weekly</i> .
John A. Holden	" Thomas Whittaker.
W. W. Howe	" E. P. Dutton & Co.
W. J. Kelly	" N. Y. Photogravure Co.
Wilbur B. Ketcham,	2 Cooper Union, N. Y.
Robert Morris	" D. Appleton & Co.
D. Pritchard	" D. Appleton & Co.
H. M. Reed	" George Routledge & Sons.
J. T. Ryan	" Cassell Pub. Co.
C. E. Savage	" G. P. Putnam's Sons.
C. E. Speirs	" D. Van Nostrand Co.
W. R. Spinney	" T. Y. Crowell & Co.
E. F. Treat	" <i>The American Stationer</i> .
J. F. Vogelius	" Henry Holt & Co.
G. L. Wheelock	" The Century Co.

The treasurer reported that thirty members had paid their dues for the first six months, amounting in all to \$54.

The Board of Managers held its first meeting on the evening of February 15, 1895, again at the

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office of Henry Holt & Co., at the invitation of Mr. J. F. Vogelius, one of the most earnest of the organizers of the League. Mr. Wing presided and twelve of the Board responded to the call of the roll. The election of officers resulted as follows: First Vice-President, Mr. Charles E. Butler; Second Vice-President, Mr. Charles E. Speirs; Secretary, Mr. Charles A. Burkhardt; and Treasurer, Mr. J. B. Brigham. A Membership Committee and an Entertainment Committee were also appointed.

These were the beginnings of an association that in a very short time justified its existence in so far as "the cultivation of the fraternal relations of its members and the furthering of the interests of the respective callings" were concerned, and that, during its existence thus far, has in the most pleasant yet dignified manner catered to the entertainment of its members, as the following brief survey of its activity will show.

## FIRST YEAR

MARCH, 1895—APRIL, 1896

ON the evening of March 13, the League gave its first "Smoker." Though the weather was almost as wretched as on the evening when the League was formally organized, nearly two hundred gathered together in the anything but cheerful top floor of the Gramercy Lyceum, at 117 West Twenty-third Street. Indeed, we may say right here, that the very fact that the League took root and grew up in so unattractive a meeting place as the Gramercy Lyceum, and, later, in the dreary quarters in Hardmann Hall, at No. 4 West Nineteenth Street, near Fifth Avenue, alone furnished the strongest kind of proof that the League filled a want, and filled it creditably and to the satisfaction of all its members.

The League was particularly fortunate in its choice of the Entertainment Committee, many of whom, especially Mr. Charles E. Butler, served almost continuously from the start to the beginning of the tenth year of the League's existence,

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when the veterans insisted upon being retired. Under the inspiration of the Entertainment Committee and the many able gentlemen who helped to entertain and instruct the League the meanness of the surroundings of its earlier quarters were quickly forgotten. Tobacco, cigars and pipes were always liberally supplied, and light refreshments were served at the close of each "Smoker."

At the first "Smoker," the president, Mr. Wing, after cordially welcoming the company, read the following letter prepared by a committee appointed for the purpose of advising the trade of the objects and aims of the League:

While the objects and aims of The Booksellers' League are concisely set forth in Article II. of the Constitution, viz.: "The objects of the League are the cultivation of fraternal relations among its members, and the furthering of the interests of their respective callings in such manner as the League may from time to time decide," yet the Board of Managers deem it advisable that a more comprehensive statement be made touching the more serious work of the League.

At the outset let it be clearly understood that the League is national, not sectional, in its tendencies, and that the establishment of auxiliary leagues in the various cities and towns of the United States is deemed most desirable. It is hoped that the social features of the League will ever be prominent, but we believe it is only by work of permanent value and of general interest to the trade that the society can insure to itself a long and useful career. To that end it is proposed, just as soon as the membership and finances will warrant, to inaugurate in addition to our meetings for social inter-

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course and enjoyment a series of lectures by accredited authorities on the various subjects of value chiefly to booksellers, publishers and stationers. It is intended that these lectures shall cover such subjects as literature in general, the history of printing, book publishing, bookselling, paper-making (including stationery), business methods, practical hints as to store management, and kindred topics too numerous to mention.

This system of education in the booktrade and its allied branches must in time bring about a spirit of trade pride, and a desire to furnish necessary tools, and provide for the bettering of trade methods. It might not, therefore, be too sanguine to expect, for instance, that in time the League, trained to a knowledge of its needs and its responsibility, will lend its active co-operation in preparing and issuing bibliographical and other works of interest and value, not only to the booktrade in this country, but to all interested in American books, wherever they may live.

As soon as practicable, permanent quarters should be secured, suitable for the needs of the club; and, with growing membership and widening scope, it will undoubtedly become not only desirable, but possible, to build a permanent home for the League, suited to all its varied business needs, and also of such character and management as to make it not only attractive, but a financial success.

Having, as we think, clearly though briefly stated the objects and aims of the League as now conceived, it remains for the members of the respective trades and professions in whose interest the League was organized to give the movement their cordial support by applying for membership, and thereby securing to the book and stationery trades and associate branches a strong, active organization which, if properly managed on the lines indicated, must necessarily be productive of good results.

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During its first year, the League gave seven smokers, three lectures, an excursion up the Hudson and its first Annual Dinner.

At its second "Smoker," the League entertained Messrs. Charles J. Longman, of the London firm of Longmans & Co., William W. Appleton and Henry Holt. Mr. Longman described the methods and workings of the London Booksellers' Provident Association, and Mr. Holt said some encouraging things to the League which put all its members into splendid humor. An excellent programme of music and recitations was also provided.

The third "Smoker" was held at Webster Hall, 119 East Eleventh Street, to assist The Booksellers' and Stationers' Provident Association. The experiment was not a success owing to the intrusion of an element that was not congenial to the members of the League, and the experiment was therefore not repeated.

### <sup>1</sup> EXCURSION UP THE HUDSON

On June 29, the League enjoyed a pleasant afternoon aboard the *Matteawan*. Unfortunately, rainy and foggy weather prevented the ship from proceeding further up the Hudson than Haverstraw Bay, but this was made up on the homeward trip by a sail around New York Bay past the Liberty statue and around Governor's Island,



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reaching New York about nine o'clock in the evening. A little before eight o'clock the saloon of the ship was sought by a large number of those on board, who were entertained by songs and recitations. Mr. Edward W. Townsend was among the entertainers, and read selections from his "Chimmie Fadden." A good orchestra provided music.

On November 15, Mr. George Haven Putnam delivered an address to the League on "Books and Booksellers in the Middle Ages," which was listened to with close attention. An entertainment, including song, selections on the zither, humorous and "heavy" dramatic recitations, and story-telling rounded out a most enjoyable evening.

Shortly after the League began its work, Mr. Charles A. Burkhardt in an informal way began keeping a list of the members of the League who were seeking employment. The experiment proved so successful that an Employment Bureau was established and subsequently put in charge of Mr. Charles E. Bonnell, under whose efficient management the Bureau has done most satisfactory work of quite as much direct benefit to the employer as to the assistant.

The year 1896 found the League in prosperous condition with about 250 members on its roll. On January 17, the members, their families and

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friends, listened to a lecture entitled "Twenty Years a Dealer in Brains," by the late Major James B. Pond, that was illustrated with stereopticon views.

At the "Smoker," held on February 21, Mr. J. C. Pumpelly gave his views on "The Bookseller from the Customer's Point of View," in which the book clerk was goodnaturedly taken to task for his many alleged shortcomings. The task of rebuttal fell to the lot of Mr. A. Growoll and Mr. Charles E. Butler, the former treating the subject seriously, the latter humorously describing "A Day in the Life of a Book Clerk," that was greatly appreciated by the audience as well as by Mr. Pumpelly who graciously acknowledged himself vanquished.

### *FIRST ANNUAL MEETING*

The first annual meeting took place on March 6, at which the work of the League was reviewed. The number of members was reported to be 325, representing every firm in New York City, as well as firms in other cities. The treasurer's report showed receipts to be \$637 and expenses \$507, leaving a balance of \$130. The election resulted in the unanimous choice of Mr. J. N. Wing as president. At a later meeting of the Board of Trustees, Mr. Butler and Mr. Speirs were re-elected First and Second Vice-Presidents, re-

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spectively; Mr. Burkhardt, Secretary, and Mr. J. B. Brigham, Treasurer. The remainder of the evening was taken up by Mr. Charles Welsh who delivered an interesting address on "Some Publishers' Puffs and Piracies of the 18th Century."

### *FIRST ANNUAL DINNER*

The crowning event of the year was the first Annual Dinner held at the St. Denis Hotel on the evening of April 7. Notwithstanding the wretched weather—the League very rarely has been favored with fine and clear weather—every one who had purchased a ticket, with but four exceptions, put in a prompt appearance. At eight o'clock 130 members and their guests took their seats in the gaily decorated dining room of the hotel. When the cloth had been removed, the president, Mr. Wing, after a few remarks, introduced as the first speaker Mr. George Haven Putnam, one of the staunchest friends of the League. It had been the idea of the committee in planning the literary portion of the banquet to have the speakers discuss in regular order the evolution of a book—from Genesis to Revelation—in which the author should represent Genesis, the printer and binder Numbers, the publisher and bookseller Judges, and the trade journalist and reader should figure as a sort of Revelations. However, by request the order was disregarded so as to enable Mr. Putnam to speak first.

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### THE PUBLISHER

Mr. Putnam, after a few introductory remarks, said :

I want, in the first place, to give a word of very cordial congratulation to the distinctive and important work that is being accomplished by The Booksellers' League. I believe in associations, and I have, in fact, an old-time affection for the mediæval guild. I think that the men who are interested in their occupations, whether these be trades or professions, should be ready to be proud of their work and to emphasize their association with this work. The theory of the guild implies preparation, apprenticeship, training through the various stages of skill and experience until the degree of "master" has been reached, and the necessity of such training and of the highest possible standard of work of our ideal for those who take charge of the selling of books cannot be too much emphasized. In this respect, I think we ought not to lose sight of the example of the members of the German booktrade, who, both as employees and employers, probably give a more thorough measure of preparation and of training to their work than is given even by such wide-awake, intelligent Americans as those who compose this assembly. I remember, when a student in Göttingen, the method in the bookshops of old Deuerlich and Rupprecht. Either one of these booksellers, and nearly every one of their staff of assistants, was quite competent to guide students through any course of studies, or of reading, from botany to Sanscrit.

I doubt whether the majority of our booksellers of to-day, capable and enterprising as they are, would be in a position to assume any such class of responsibilities.

There is this also to be borne in mind in connection with bookselling. It is incumbent upon those of us who get our livelihood out of the distribution of literature

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to do what may be practicable towards the literary education of the community. We are not merely to sell books that are asked for, but we are ourselves to help develop a taste in and a demand for books. This matter of literary knowledge on the part of the booksellers, and of the exercise of the legitimate literary influence from the bookshops, becomes of more importance now that the sale of "light literature," and particularly fiction, is being so largely interfered with through the competition of the ten-cent and the five-cent magazines and the overgrown Sunday papers. The publishers and booksellers, as their opportunities of making pennies out of the sale of novels become lessened, will have to depend upon securing their livelihood from the more "solid" class of literature.

Standing as I do from day to day on the platform of the Elevated Railroad in Twenty-third Street, I note on the north sidewalk, where my friend Burkhardt and myself are trying to secure a living from the sale of books, an occasional passerby, and now and then one of those who pass actually finds his way into my own shop or into that of my valued neighbor. On the south side of the street, however, where stand the great dry-goods shops, the confectionery shop, and the restaurant, the passing is steady and continuous. These stores are thronged and the buying is continuous. I protest, as one interested not only in the making of books, but in the literary development of the community, at the disproportionate expenditure given by this community to ribbons, gim-cracks, and sugar-candy as compared with that which they are willing to put into the literature of the ages. In the diverting of this taste, and in the development of a hunger for literature, we have a large responsibility upon our hands.

The publishers of the olden days, while they had many obstacles to contend with, were fortunate at least in this: They were searching for literature which could

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be made available for the needs of their customers, and there was, I think, on the part of these customers an actual hunger for books. The principal responsibility of the publisher of to-day is that of a discourager of literary productions. By far the larger proportion of the material that comes into a publishing office is never printed and never ought to be printed. You gentlemen, who do what you can to sell books, now and then find occasion to criticise the publishers for not giving you better material to sell; you do not know how much material we are holding off from you.

I should like to see established in different districts throughout the country certain literary investigation committees through which all material must pass before it should be allowed to come into a publishing office. A budding author should be compelled to pay a fee for the support of the machinery of such institutions or examining committees, say five dollars for a "literary purpose" and ten dollars for a "literary aspiration," and in the greater number of instances, after the payment of his ten dollars, he ought to be sent back to his farm a wiser man, with the decision that his work should be given to other things than the production of manuscript.

I should also lay stress upon the importance of having all authors put through a certain amount of business training before being permitted to enter a publishing office. My friend Mr. Ford, who discoursed so brilliantly on the organization of a "literary shop," ought, according to this theory, to have at least a two years' apprenticeship in such a shop before bringing his wares (even wares so good as those he can produce) to the publisher for presentation to the public. If every member of the Authors' Society, on either side of the Atlantic, could have a training in the actual work of selling books, there would be a better understanding as to the

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actual cost of publishing, that is to say of the cost not only of producing the printed material in the book, but of getting this book into the hands of the buyer, and of getting from the buyer the money for it.

Publishers must, of necessity, be pessimists if they are not to become bankrupt. We are in the habit of meeting in our offices authors full of hopeful enthusiasm, and we have occasionally with such authors made the suggestion that it would be interesting to show them how books are kept. I take them down from my office, not to the shop where they might possibly occasionally see some person buying a book, but still lower down, into the basement, the place that reminds one of a cemetery or of the catacombs. There are the great piles which have been made to sell, and which, in so many cases, have not sold. I point out this stack, comprising perhaps ten or twelve hundred volumes, with the remark, "Yes, this was brought to us fifteen years ago by an author who was very confident of finding a large demand in the Southern States." Whatever became of the demand, the books are still in the stock. The next pile represented some expectation in connection with particular political events. The third was to have taken the world by storm with a new arrangement for the organization of society, etc., etc. When I take my author upstairs again he (or she) is in a chastened frame of mind, and I find it more easy to come to an understanding as to publishing possibilities and as to a publishing agreement.

Well, gentlemen, these words spoken in joke, are, in part at least, based upon sober experience and sober thought. It is pleasant to see this cheerful crowd giving consideration to a plentiful dinner, and to bear in mind that the group is supported and that the dinner is being paid for out of the margin of profit on books. I trust that this margin, which sometimes seems so seriously

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diminishing, is not in the near future going to be so far reduced that at another annual meeting of the League the dinner might be replaced by a sandwich. Do the best you can, gentlemen, with the organization of your League and with the sale of the best books, and the authors, the publishers, and the community at large will have full reason to appreciate the value of your existence and of your labors.

### THE AUTHOR

The next speaker, Mr. James L. Ford, of "The Literary Shop" fame, who spoke for "the author," began by remarking that although the programme called for speeches from the publisher, the printer, the binder, the author, and the reader, no one had been deputed to tell how to go to work to sell manuscript to a publisher. I hoped, he said, that when Mr. Putnam began to speak he would explain this, but he never peeped. The secret of how to induce a publisher to buy manuscript is still locked in his bosom. If he were to reveal it he would become a bankrupt.

It is a peculiar pleasure to me to-night to find myself in the company of so many of the men who help to make our bookstores what they are, and so long as the legitimate booktrade remains in the competent hands of such gentlemen as I see before me, we need have no fear that it will languish. There is one thought which brings terror to an author's mind, and that is the fear that his works will fall into the hands of that commercial cuttle-fish, the department store, which grasps literature in one of its tentacles, and in another the knitted



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undershirt. In one of these places we wander through bosky bowers of ingrain carpents and behold literature crowned with a garland of red suspenders. The presiding genius of this fairy dell of commerce is a tall young man with mayonnaise whiskers and a long lead pencil. He doesn't know whether you have come there for literature or for Hecker's Self-Raising Flour. And if you buy a book off him it will be sent home with a dried codfish in the same package. If you ask him for "The Red Badge of Courage," he will very likely give you a red flannel undershirt. I understand that I am myself being "glosed out" in one of these establishments, but I would prefer to die peacefully in my bed.

### THE PRINTER

Mr. Joseph J. Little, master-printer, dwelt mainly on the development of the "art preservative of all arts" within the last half century. Mr. Little was the first to use the cylinder press in New York. Before he could print his first work on this press he had to pledge himself that he would return the plates to the publisher uninjured. When the work was finished it was admired, yet he was certain that the same class of work would not pass the scrutiny of the present-day publisher, so high had the standard of workmanship been raised. Mr. Little explained incidentally how he became a printer. When he was a boy he said it was a common practice among circus people to advertise that clergymen and printers would be admitted to their shows free of charge. There was no theological seminary in his town, but there

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was a printer—a good one, by the way—and so Mr. Little made his choice. In that choice he honored a craft that is by no means poor in great names.

### THE BOOKBINDER

Mr. Robert Rutter, one of the old guard of bookbinders in this country, spoke in behalf of his craft as follows :

I had occasion, some short time since, to arrange the details of a trade dinner. A text was given to a gentleman, abundantly able to respond, but who declined, having, as he said, "to take a drink"—I should say, "railway train." The text was "The Author, Publisher, Printer, and Binder."

On a slip of paper he sent me as follows: "The author is my grandmother. The publisher is ye boss. The printer is the devil. The binder is—the Lord knows what."

The binder stands between the upper and nether mill-stones and is pretty thoroughly ground up, over and under, about every twenty-four hours in the day. He is one of the most patient, long suffering of men. He has no trials or perplexities—oh, no! The wheels in his factory, as well as in his head, always run smoothly, never break or get out of order. He has to cover up the defects of the printer, meekly take the hypercritical criticism of the publisher, and is expected to accomplish wonders in time of execution—in beauty of appearance—and his work must be delivered on the first floor top of a fifteen-story building, and sold before the glue is dry. If his books warp, he is called "a man of no sense" for delivering them so fresh. If he does not deliver on time, he is a failure and a fraud.

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He must be in his factory from 8 A.M. to 6 P.M. every day in the week, and, at seasons, 24 hours in the day. He must never go fishing or hunting, lest he should be wanted.

A certain binder did go fishing one day. His customer called, was informed of his whereabouts, and replied:

"I cannot understand how Mr. Jones can afford to so waste his time, and keep me waiting for the fifty copies of 'The Catspaw,' ordered yesterday. I must have my books at once, as I am going to my country seat and won't be back for three months."

The binder must always keep from fifty to one hundred men and women standing idle, waiting for the next order, and must never make a new promise till the last order is out of his hands. I know a binder who recently had a call for twenty-four samples which were to be made in six colors of goods, made by four different manufacturers, and stamped in six colors of ink. Time, 10 A.M. "Now," said the customer, "my traveller goes to California at 5 P.M. to-day, and as a matter of course, he must take these goods with him. Send them in at 4 P.M., and when the work is ready for publication you may make an estimate."

The binder is expected to have unlimited floor space for a dumping ground, and to properly care for and keep records of and make annual or semi-annual reports on all "plugs," N. G.'s, O. P.'s, and all other rot. . . .

And so the round of the bindery is made.

The binder, as a rule, is healthy, grows stout, hale and hearty. No doubt this comes from his proximity to paste, glue, and microbes in general.

Look at the book clerk. He has everything so nice, wears a new three-and-one-half-inch laundered collar every day to hold his head in the right position. It is estimated that five years' service in a bookstore will reduce a young man's weight fifty pounds, take off all

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the hair he ever had on his head, and force him to wear glasses. Is that not so, Brother Brentano? Put on the X-rays.

The binder must understand bovine, be familiar with cow, calf, sheep, goat and hog—especially the hog. He must hang on the ragged edge—the rough edge, his circuit edge, the red, green, yellow, gilt, and red-blue-and-white edge, and finally the edge of despair. Birds and reptiles come within his scope. He must be friends with the wriggling snake and the canvas back, the round back, the semi-round, the flat, the humpback, and the pain in the back.

The binder is also fortunate. In my experience I know many cases where, in a few years, some have been able to retire—on what they owed—and live handsomely in the quiet shades of foreign lands.

After all that has been said, the binder is an important factor in bookmaking. His is the last mechanical operation. The author and the printer, having done their part, the publisher, having performed a portion of his work, the binder then comes in to put the brains of the author, the mechanical work of the printer, and the efforts of the publisher into a commercial and marketable form; then comes in the supreme effort of the publisher—to make the venture pay. If the work is a success—well. If not, the publisher, who takes the larger risk, gets but little, and the author—gets left; and quite often the printer and binder.

Time will not permit any reference to the bindings of Grolier and his contemporaries. The age is commercial. A few remaining words I have to say are on commercial binding. Outside of the decorative art displayed by the artist, and applied by the binder, it seems to me the comfort of the reader is important. Now, what is *not* a comfortable book? A book made of heavy clay-loaded paper, heavy board, bound so stiff in the back

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that the thumb and finger become exhausted in holding it open but a short time. The book on coated paper and black-face type is excellent for the optician—bad for the reader.

The comfortable book is the clear moderate-weight laid paper, fair type, good ink, strongly sewed, made with flexible back, that lies open in your hand at any page, without pressure, and closes without showing steps.

Allow me to say in closing, in a career of fifty-six years in the binding trade, I sincerely believe the interest of the author, publisher, bookseller, printer, and binder should be one, their relations mutual and harmonious, their intercourse cheerful and pleasant, and their business transactions fair and equitable.

## THE BOOKSELLER

When the president presented Mr. Charles T. Dillingham as the representative of the booksellers he received a well-deserved ovation. After the applause subsided Mr. Dillingham, after acknowledging the compliment, said:

It would be an easy task to speak of "The Bookseller" could we define him. The name would indicate a man who sells books as a business, either solely or as a principal part of it, but I venture to say that there are few left of the species outside of the large cities and there he is generally also a publisher.

The causes leading to this condition have been discussed before you on a late occasion and have been so often ably set forth in the page of *The Publishers' Weekly* that I will refer but briefly to that subject, although it is one I feel deeply upon, having been one of

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those most seriously affected by the gradual decrease in the number of retail booksellers as a distinct class.

The booksellers years ago in New England were largely men of education, recruited from the clergy and school teachers, men who could and did intelligently deal in wares so congenial. In the Middle States book-selling was largely joined with dealing in drugs, and the two lines formed a lucrative business.

Bookselling in former times was profitable because the people bought of the local bookseller at the advertised retail price. The bookseller purchased a full stock each fall and spring at the publishing centres, usually of one house, for nearly all publishers sold every variety of books, having exchange accounts with each other. Long credits were given until the breaking out of the Civil War in 1861, when all accounts were made strictly thirty days, and the volume of business was so great and stocks were so quickly turned that the contraction in time was not burdensome. After a time it became a custom to give longer time on holiday bills only. That custom has since become so extended that orders are now taken in the spring due the following year.

The retail bookseller was prosperous until late in the 70's. The facilities of transportation, fast freight, express and mail became such that the bookseller came less often to market, and in very many cases not at all, sending forward his order by mail and buying his large bills from travellers. The publishers having generally retired from dealing in outside books, confining themselves to their own publications, organized a system of sending travellers to, first, the larger cities, and later, to the small towns and hamlets. This appeared at first to be an advantage to the bookseller, as it saved him the time and expense of visits to market, although it allowed him to see *only* such goods as it was especially desired he should buy. The serious disadvantage was that

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naturally the enterprising travelling salesman in his eagerness to swell his sales and secure for his employer as large a return as possible for his outlay, diligently sought new outlets for his wares outside of the book-seller, and we so well know he found them, and the hard times for booksellers then commenced. The salesman found he could sell large bills of prominent popular books to a class that look for sensations in way of advertising, and owing to the wide margin between the advertised retail price and the net price of books they were a shining mark for such a purpose. These dealers would sell books only during the holidays, never buying a regular line through a publisher's list, and by advertising and selling at no profit, or less than cost, the well-known books of the day, they could derive great benefit by attracting people to their emporium, and by piling up cheap 12mos in great confusion with the advertised books enough would be bought at a large profit to make up for loss on the advertised books.

The bookseller could not meet such competition, and in a great measure the chief profit of his year's business was lost to him, namely, his holiday sales.

The publication yearly of so vast a number of books renders it impossible for a retailer to keep more than a small part of books asked for in his store. It is true that for some years he has been able, by the aid of the catalogues and lists published by *The Publishers' Weekly*, to keep posted and to ascertain of whom he can obtain any American book. Those admirable aids are of inestimable value to all the trade, and are a disadvantage to but one class.

The jobber would prefer his customers to know very little in regard to where to obtain books, save of *him*, the jobber. I have not hitherto referred to the jobber, it being hardly necessary, for he can be classed only with "Lo, the poor Indian," whose eye is ever fixed toward the setting sun.

## THE BOOKSELLERS' LEAGUE

It is not improbable that in the future it will be found necessary for booksellers to confine themselves each to a special line of books and not try to keep and sell every sort and kind published.

The great question is, What can be done to preserve the calling of "A Bookseller" throughout the United States?

He is needed as a distributor, as an agent for the publisher. I am informed that not many years ago the trade in Germany was in a very deplorable condition, and that by wise and prudent action of both the publisher, who viewed with alarm the decay of retail trade, and the bookseller himself, who had the good sense to meet the publisher in a reasonable spirit, an organization was formed, which has stood the test, and under which a paying business is insured to the whole trade, and the ruinous cutting has been abolished.

The English trade is agitating the subject, and no doubt will make a stride in the near future in the right direction.

Let us hope that some movement may be inaugurated in this country that will again make our calling a respected one and allow to its followers at least a living.

Bookselling has often been classed as next to a profession. It is certainly in spite of its many disadvantages a most fascinating pursuit, and few when once engaged in it desert it for other occupations, and if they do they generally return to it after a while, for in no other line of trade do they come in contact with so many intelligent, interesting people. We can truly say of it: With all thy faults we love thee still.

### TRADE JOURNALS

Mr. R. R. Bowker, of *The Publishers' Weekly*, responding to the toast of "Trade Journals,"



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spoke briefly, desiring to make way for "The Reader," who, he said, was after all the most important person with whom the book trade was concerned. He confessed that trade journals were but incidental auxiliaries to the trade, but he hoped nevertheless that Mr. Growoll and himself would be permitted to join that glorious company of Mr. Putnam's proposed guild, with its resplendent new uniform—he supposed of binder's cloth, paper label collars, and gilt edges—real gilt and not Dutch metal. He congratulated The Booksellers' League on the proof that it had given of its right to exist in its first year of robust infancy, and on the right which it had earned to wear the tri-color badge, representing its successes in business, pleasure, and educative work. The trade journal could not exist without the help of the trade, and was indeed only a co-operative phonograph, registering what it learned from the trade for the benefit of others in the trade—in which it must have, as it had in the past, the cordial help of every member of the trade. *The Publishers' Weekly* recognized particularly its obligations to the League and the trade generally, although like others it had its grievances at the printer and the binder, particularly when, as in a recent case, the printer put it in the uncomfortable position of attributing to a worthy clergyman the writing of a "Guide to Immorality" instead of a "Guide to Immortality."

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Notwithstanding the discouraging features connected with the book trade, he believed it would long exist, and he said it was always pleasant to think back to the old Harper motto, as old as Plato, and to imagine the trade as torch-bearers of literature, passing the torch of education, in the shape of good books, from one to another in the race of life.

### THE READER

Mr. J. Clarence Harvey, who was to speak for the reader, confessed that he had been in doubt as to whether he was to speak for the reader inside the fold—the publisher's reader—or for the reader on the outside—that is, the man who pays, or, rather, is expected to pay, the full advertised price for the books he wishes to possess. If he was to speak for the former his lay would be brief, because that species does not read, in the proper sense of the word, any more than the wine-taster can be said to drink of that which is placed before him for his professional opinion. If he was expected to speak for the latter class, he would have to decline the honor, because he had never thus far been able to "pay the full price." Mr. Harvey by degrees worked himself out of his feigned embarrassment, and entertained the company with a paraphrase of a classical allegory that must have been heard to be appreciated; cold type could not do it justice.

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The talks were interspersed with songs by Professor C. B. Hawley, the possessor of a fine bass voice, who kindly volunteered his talent. He sang in his usual artistic manner Longfellow's "The Arrow" ("I shot an arrow into the air ;") a famous German drinking song, "Im tiefen Keller sitz ich hier," and one to which he gave no name.

From whatever point of view it might be regarded the dinner was a splendid success, and it may well be doubted if until then the booktrade collectively had ever spent four hours more pleasantly than those taken up by this first dinner of the League.

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APRIL, 1896—APRIL, 1897

THE first regular "Smoker" of the second official year of the League was held on April 17, 1896, on which occasion Professor C. G. Herbermann of the College of the City of New York delivered an interesting and instructive address on "Booksellers of Ancient Greece and Rome." Professor Herbermann's lecture was followed by selections played on the mandolin and guitar by Edward Bleecker and T. Riedinger, comic Irish songs by the comedians Conroy and Brown, recitations from Kipling by Volney Streamer, and a simultaneous performance on a harmonica and a banjo by Louis Meyers. The dinner committee reported at the managers' meeting, held before the "Smoker" commenced, that it would turn into the treasury a small surplus instead of drawing upon it for funds to cover an anticipated deficit.

The May "Smoker" was held on the 15th at Hardmann Hall. The programme of the evening

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included a lecture on bookmaking by the Chinese, delivered by Dr. W. A. P. Martin, Professor Emeritus of the Tungwen Kwen (College of Foreign Knowledge), an imperial institution at Peking where English and the chief European languages are taught. Dr. Martin's lecture was illustrated with a number of Chinese books and copies of the *Peking Gazette*, "rubblings" and other objects referred to in his lecture. At the close of the lecture the League was treated to a musical programme.

On October 16, the League was entertained by The Euphonia Club orchestra, which gave its services at the request of Mr. Thomas Cadigan. The orchestra was assisted by Mr. Kircher who volunteered a violin solo and by Frank Wise and E. B. Ogilvie who rendered several comic songs.

At the November "Smoker" Mr. A. Growoll delivered an address on the "Relation of the Salesman to the Customer," and Mr. W. H. Parker provided for the entertainment of the members a guessing contest which he introduced under the title of "Objective Book Titles." The questions were quite clever, and by their very simplicity puzzled most of the veterans.

Early in 1897 the League offered a prize for the best design submitted for a seal for the

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League and a badge or button to be worn on the lapel of the coat.

On January 15, the League entertained its members and their families and friends at Hardmann Hall. The feature of the evening was a concert by the Euphonia Club orchestra, led by Frederick Kircher, who was assisted by several soloists.

At the February "Smoker" the League discussed the vexed question of the arrangement of stock. Mr. A. Growoll, at the request of the President, introduced the debate, after which Mr. W. H. Parker championed the arrangement of stock by publishers, Mr. Frederick D. Lacy by subject, and Mr. Frank Appel an eclectic arrangement. Mr. Frank Marling closed the subject most happily by humorously treating the subject from the "city salesman's" point of view.

Owing to the disagreeable weather so few members ventured out on the evening of March 5, that considerably less than a quorum was present, and the annual meeting was therefore postponed.

### *SECOND ANNUAL DINNER*

The event of the year again was the annual dinner held on the evening of April 6 at the St. Denis Hotel. Owing to the absence of the Presi-

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dent, Mr. J. N. Wing, who was ill, Mr. A. Growoll took his place as chairman and toast-master. Upwards of 150 members were present, and for the first time the League was favored with fine weather. At the guests' table sat Mr. Henry Carey Baird, of Philadelphia; Dr. John S. Billings, Director of the New York Public Library; Messrs. Ripley Hitchcock, S. W. Marvin, George Haven Putnam, F. Hopkinson Smith and J. Clarence Harvey.

The entertainment committee had again made plans to have the literary portion of the entertainment proceed along trade lines, and the choice of speakers was indeed a happy one. Mr. Ripley Hitchcock, then the literary adviser of D. Appleton & Co., spoke to the toast of "The Literary Adviser," his remarks being well-timed, exceedingly clever, and punctuated with flashes of wit and satire. Mr. S. W. Marvin, of the manufacturing department of Charles Scribner's Sons, gave an interesting talk on the subject of which he is considered a master, the manufacture of books. Dr. John S. Billings chose for his subject the "Bookseller and the Librarian," and delivered an address full of solid information and advice in a thoroughly enjoyable manner; Mr. Henry Carey Baird gave a review of "The Trade" during the exciting times that he was connected with it—from 1833 to 1896; Mr. Charles E. Butler gave a delightfully humorous account of the life

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of "The Buyer;" Mr. F. Hopkinson Smith spoke briefly on American art and literature, and Mr. J. Clarence Harvey read a poem in a most dramatic and effective manner.\* The speaking was supplemented by music, and with songs by Mr. George A. Fleming. It seemed almost as though the League had exhausted the possibilities of providing dinners that were so remarkable in every respect as their first two. But those who labored under this delusion were doomed to an agreeable disappointment as the following pages will show.

On the 24th of April, 1897, at the second annual meeting, Mr. A. Growoll was elected President. At the meeting of the Board of Trustees, held four days later, Mr. John A. Holden was elected First Vice-President; Mr. Frederick D. Lacy, Second Vice-President; Mr. Charles A. Burkhardt, Secretary, and Mr. James B. Brigham, Treasurer.

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\* These addresses were printed in full in *The Publishers' Weekly* for April 10, 1897, v. 51, no. 1315, pages 654-663.



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MAY, 1897—MARCH, 1898

ON May 12, 1897, the League gave a "Euchre Party" at the Gramercy Lyceum. Though it poured incessantly until late in the evening, upwards of forty faithful Leaguers gathered about the tables to enjoy the Progressive Euchre Party that had been arranged by the Entertainment Committee. Fifteen games were played and thoroughly enjoyed by all present. The prizes were a silk umbrella, a pocket-knife and a comic "booby."

At a meeting of the Board of Managers that preceded the card party, the design for the seal and button, now well-known to the members of the League, was adopted, and the prize awarded to its originator, Mr. W. H. Parker. Mr. Parker donated the prize of \$15 towards the expense of striking the dies, and the Board, in return, voted that an *edition de luxe* of one copy of the design be struck off and presented to Mr. Parker.

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### *TROLLEY PARTY*

Sixty-five members of the League and their friends took part in a trolley ride to Jamaica, L. I., on the afternoon of June 26, 1897. The car in which the party was conveyed was gayly decorated with flags, bunting, and colored electric lights, and carried two ensigns bearing the design of the seal of the League. Jamaica was reached about four o'clock, where was discussed the luncheon set out at Pettit's hotel. After luncheon the party rode to Bergen Beach, where an hour was pleasantly passed. The ride home through beautiful sections of the suburban portion of the future Greater New York was only too quickly over. The excursion was an entire success, due largely to its originator, Mr. W. H. Parker, of the entertainment committee.

### *EUCHRE PARTY*

The Euchre Party held in May had proved so successful that another one was called for by the members, and given on the evening of September 8, also at the Gramercy Lyceum. Nineteen games were played, the prizes being a handsomely gold-mounted walking stick, a pair of cuff buttons, and a donkey for the "booby." On this occasion the first League buttons, in gold and silver, were shown and offered for sale.

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### *IS BOOKSELLING A PROFITABLE PROFESSION?*

On the evening of October 13, the League gathered together at the Gramercy Lyceum to listen to the discussion of the question: "Is Book-selling a Profitable Profession for a Young Man?" The question involved the further queries: How does the booktrade stand in comparison with other trades as a profitable business? What is the outlook? Are the salaries of employees of the booktrade on an equal footing with those of employees in other lines of trades? and, finally, Is it a good business for a young man to take up? The speakers, while hedging on the real question at issue, all seemed agreed that the book business was a pleasant one to be connected with, an honorable calling, which involved almost endless attention and toil, if not downright drudgery, which at the best can guarantee to its devotees only a fair living. Looking down upon the rows of well-dressed, apparently well-fed, and cheerful looking auditors, one might legitimately have jumped at the conclusion that the answer to the main question could not be answered otherwise than affirmatively.

### THE PUBLISHER

Mr. Desmond Fitz Gerald, of the firm of R. F. Fenno & Co., was the first speaker, and repre-

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sented the young publisher. After a few happy introductory remarks he continued:

. . . In considering the business of publishing from the money-making standpoint, it is needless for me to direct attention to the successes that have been achieved by old and well established firms. They have grown with the country and have so fortified themselves in the confidence of the reading public that whatever they may issue is assured a sale large enough to at least balance the accounts of outlay and receipts.

We will not consider at all the firms whose business it is to induce the unsuspecting commoner to pay in advance a sufficient sum to meet all real and imaginary expenses.

In speaking of the "workers," and representing as I do a very young concern, it is pertinent for us to consider the chances for a permanent success—accepting conditions as they now are.

If we are the men we should be we have ambitions. We are anxious to become more important, more needful to our fellow-men, and, incidentally, perhaps, to gather in, as a result of our efforts, a little more of "the root of all evil."

The publisher's ambition is to grow large enough that he may undertake the launching of a magazine, the chief aim of which will be to further the fortunes of his own publications, and, incidentally, to secure, in the way of advertising, some of the shekels of his competitors. While this is not the universal luck of the publisher, he still goes on, hoping that his turn will come. The old-line publisher is so well established, has such a commanding advantage over the beginner, that it appears a well-nigh hopeless undertaking for the man of limited means to enter the lists and seek to glean his quota of gold and fame. Knowing the general booktrade fairly well, I have little hesitancy in saying that those are the

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exceptions who hold out an encouraging hand to the one ambitious to make a success as a publisher. The dealer whose discount from the old firms is one-third will condescend to buy three copies from the youngster at 40 per cent., and he certainly will expect the extreme discount on an order of twenty-five copies. In the kindness of his heart he will also compare the youngster's dollar-and-a-quarter book with the one issued by Blank & Co. at one seventy-five. The inference can therefore be easily drawn that a young publisher should also be a philosopher. He can then stand calmly by and see his "plugs"—which are plugs only because he publishes them—consume the few dollars he had at the outset termed his capital stock.

An eminent Republican authority, Thomas B. Reed, in a recent article gave expression to the following sentiment: "What a vast flood of novels alone has been poured over the earth these latter days, and they are by no means poor novels. Many of them which sink out of sight and die are more worthy of permanent fame than some of those which occupy a sure place on all the lists of those deemed imperishable by literary gentlemen who compile such lists for the instruction of those of us who are unlearned—books that are owned as a duty, and avoided as a pleasure, which men read once for their own credit and for their own comfort never read again." And I am willing to risk my reputation as a mind-reader that the sink-out-of-sight books referred to by Mr. Reed were for the most part uttered by the young publisher. With the copyright law in operation, that gives the publisher security for the money invested, what hope has the man of slender means of securing the works of the best known and most popular authors of the day?

It is only a fluke when this does occur, and he is more likely than not to be complimented by the bookseller in this wise: "If that story amounted to anything Lippin-

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cott's would have published it." Or: "Is not this an old story? The title seems familiar to me." If you don't get "hot in the collar" and stamp out of the store in high dudgeon you will end by taking his order for five copies at the same discount, approximately, for which an old firm would have booked his order for one hundred.

The authors, also, seem to appreciate the advantage that accrues to them from connection with the well-established firms, for it is a well-known fact that in many instances they ask the young house more than they would willingly accept from the fathers of the trade.

. . . There is not a single ray of hope for the young publisher, if he does not succeed in interesting the bookseller. And since I am addressing for the most part retail booksellers, I ask you to note well what I am now going to say. I wish to emphasize that, everything considered, the bookseller in aiding or giving attention to the young publisher's productions will do himself a great good and materially improve his own condition.

The bookseller's only hope, as I see it, is to broaden the field of active books, and by doing a good deal of reading on his own account, to the end that he may discover books worthy of his endorsement, cause an interest in them on the part of his customer and do a profitable business in books that may be deemed "plugs" in the store of his less enterprising neighbor, or unworthy of purchase on the part of department stores generally.

If this should come to pass, then will dawn the brightest day for all branches of the booktrade. Then can the young publisher courageously issue worthy works by the unknown writer, and confidently await satisfying results, his faith resting on the aid that thousands of able and discriminating readers (the booksellers and

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their clerks) will render. To then succeed he has only to adhere to the rule that should be called golden—"Publish that which is worthy of being perpetuated—recognized merit wherever found."

We have been laying too heavy a burden on the shoulders of our popular idols, who, being human, cannot resist the temptation to give to the world another volume, since the sale of his last book has reached many thousands in but a few short weeks. Let the bookseller broaden the field of reading, and let him not be content to foist the last six books that have won distinction, but let him also call attention to a hundred just as readable.

#### THE MANUFACTURER OF BOOKS

Mr. John A. Holden, who had been for many years connected with the firm of Thomas Whitaker, was the next speaker, and threw the following light on the status of the manufacturing department:

I have been invited to give my views of the book-trade as a business possibility for those entering on life, from the standpoint of one having some knowledge of at least one branch—that of manufacturing. Like many men in all lines of business, except that of cutting coupons in a safe-deposit vault, I have often thought that if I had only given my time and energy to something else, I might have lived on the shady side of Easy Street at forty, and I might have revelled in riches in my prime, instead of riding nightmares in search of originality. Almost every man, wherever his lot is cast, has had these misgivings. We fear the soil in which we have taken root is not rich enough for our growth.

The bookman (and in this comprehensive name I rank, commercially, all who have to do with the making

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or the selling of books) is not easily classed. He is in a calling that may justly be placed 'twixt that of a profession and an ordinary commercial pursuit, with the odds in favor of the profession. The book business demands of those who enter it hopefully an intelligence of high order, a fondness for literature, and a keen relish for those higher things in life which, after all, bring men their greatest mental satisfactions. Disappointment and discontent will forever hover about those who enter it solely with the "commercial" instinct—which is the damnatory clause in our creed.

When a boy gets a position in a bookstore, he concludes, intuitively, that it is a better "job" than any of the dozen other openings he had hunted unsuccessfully. His anxious mother is happy and contented to have her son so nicely placed, and I, for one, think she has fairly good reasons for her contentment.

The boy, if he has that valuable gift of "application," will gradually but surely make his way upward until he reaches a position that brings him in close contact with the principals of the concern, where his accumulated knowledge of detail (and what a shipload of it there is in our business!) makes him a really valuable man to his employers. If, at any period during his progress, he begins to think he is "indispensable," and tries to act out the thought, he will make the first dangerous mistake of his life. Put that down, my young friend, in your daily reference-book, where it will not be forgotten. Beware of a "swelled head," that may seriously handicap you. When a faithful employee, who has shown capabilities in that direction, is placed in charge of, or as deputy in, the manufacturing department of a publishing house, he reaches the most delightful of all branches of the book business. The field in which he works is on the uplands—is full of fascination, and can be thoroughly appreciated only by those who have



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pegged away in other departments and gradually moved upward into the realms of book creation. There are no statistics, as far as I know, of what the manufacturing man earns, but as few of them grumble lustily about poverty, I presume their salaries are somewhat on a par with their responsibilities. The love of books which grows from association in early years brings to the man in this position a spirit and enthusiasm that is positively exhilarating. It takes life and living for him out of the "demnition grind" of ordinary business. He is brought daily in close contact with a score of people in contiguous professions and trades. He loves his work, and, if not unreasonably hampered, he falls heir to a large legacy of contentment and satisfaction.

Viewed from this standpoint then, the book business offers, I believe, very satisfactory opportunities for young men who are fortunately blessed with a hopeful intelligence and the instincts of refinement. On the other hand, it offers but few attractions to those who in the spirit of barter look upon books as one would upon bricks, mere merchandise to buy and sell. Herein is the key to the whole question. Salaries in our business, as a rule, keep pace with advancement, and while few of us will admit that the amount is on a par with what we earn as individuals, yet I believe we do fully as well, if not better, than men with corresponding experience in other branches of commerce. There is in these days plenty of "room at the top," just as much as in times gone by, and the natural process of business evolution will sooner or later bring to the surface all clean-cut workers endowed with the virtues of thoroughness, honesty, and a capacity for work. Men in middle life, when dyspepsia is shedding its indigo hue, may in moments of depression imagine they would have fared better in other lines; might have accumulated a fortune in tin-ware, socks, dried apples, or a hundred other commod-

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ities that, alas, are nowadays so often sold with literature under the same roof; but to my mind the book business, after all, brings to those engaged in it professionally more compensating satisfaction, more cultured associations, and more rest from cankerous ambition than any other commercial pursuit that offers an opening to American youth.

### BOOKSELLING FROM THE BUYERS' STANDPOINT

Mr. Charles A. Burkhardt, of E. P. Dutton & Co., who represented the "buyer" in the discussion, spoke as follows:

So much has been written and said about the book business being a doomed calling, that there appears but one logical answer to the question on which your committee has asked me to express an opinion from the buyers' standpoint. I do not flatter myself that the sentiments I express are representative, and I trust you will consider them as my personal views. I know many of you will be both surprised and disappointed when I answer the question in the affirmative.

With all its drawbacks, the department store competition, and the universal clamor of customers for larger discounts which drive the poor bookseller frantic, and some even to drink, the book business, in my opinion, is far from doomed. Like any other calling, it is what you make it—either a success or a failure. With energy, push and hard work *any* business can be made to pay, its nature being but a secondary consideration.

I am expected to consider the question from one point only, namely, from that of the buyer. But my observations cannot help being those of one who, in an experience of twenty-seven years, has had a part in every

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branch of the book and stationery business, from sweeping the store and washing windows to buyer, the only exceptions to a complete course in the business being that of bookkeeper and partner. This latter end I will no doubt attain when my employers find my salary growing so large that they will think it time I shared their losses.

The book business in my time has undergone many changes. In the old days no one expected to pay less than the advertised price for a book, except teachers, clergymen and librarians. Then the department store did not strive to monopolize business, and the cheap *izmos* were unknown. The enormous output and large editions of popular authors of the present day, however, with few exceptions, were also conspicuous by their absence. The cheap *Seaside Library*, so popular a few years ago, and the department store are in a great measure responsible for the change.

It is a question in my mind whether the publisher suffers by the present condition. I firmly believe that his sales are larger, and that the general public has been educated to become bookbuyers, thus creating a larger demand than would otherwise obtain. The retail bookseller who is obliged to come into close competition with the department store is the one who suffers; he cannot protect himself with the manufacturers' profit, as is the case with the publisher who has the power of fixing a selling price, which leaves him a profit no matter how much the price is cut by the department store. I have often speculated on the time when the department store will open a publishing branch. When this is done more startling changes may be looked for.

But I must come back to my subject and take up the question in proper order:

First, What are the requirements of a successful bookseller or buyer? I answer: patience, more patience,

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and still more patience, with a mixture of good memory, and a capacity for hard work and study. A college education or literary course is not essential, although no drawback. There is, however, one thing that is indispensable, namely, adaptation and a love for the calling. Without these a young man might do better as a peanut vender.

Second, What are the chances of a young man becoming buyer? The chances are perhaps one in five hundred, although every retail salesman believes he can buy fewer "plugs" than the buyer, who is rarely called upon to sell the books he buys, if he were only given the chance. This chance is rarely within his reach. In many stores the principals themselves do the buying, and in the others, if he is a success, the buyer holds on until death removes him. If he is a failure, his house is one also, and there will be no vacancy to fill.

Third, Does it pay to buy books as merchandise or literature? I make it a business to buy them as merchandise—without sentiment—merely considering the chances of their sale. A student of literature, or lover of books, who were to buy books for their literary merit would often find to his sorrow that the public did not share his views. Many books of real merit unfortunately have no sale whatever, while books of no merit whatever have the greatest sale.

Fourth, What is expected of a buyer? He is expected to be posted on all books published and to be published. This information he derives from the trade papers and literary journals. As he must study these details at home, his work is not done with the closing of the store. He is expected to possess a phenomenal judgment, to know in advance what books the public will call for, and in buying omit none. All others he must condemn.

Fifth, The rocks on which a buyer can be wrecked. These are drink, dinners, gifts, commissions, or personal friendship for the salesman.

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Sixth, What are the chances of a young man becoming his own master? When I was a boy the chances were many, but the times have changed. As long as the department store sells books at a loss, or at a trifle above cost as an advertisement, it is a foregone conclusion that a young man would have little or no chance to make a living by starting in business for himself. The many recent failures of new concerns prove this assertion.

Seventh, Does the book business pay large salaries? This I answer in the negative. There is of course a difference of opinion as to what constitutes a large salary. Some would consider it to be \$10 or \$15 a week, and others would say \$5000 or \$6000 a year. There are no such plums as the latter, very few of the high-priced men receiving more than \$3000 a year, and these are obliged to work hard to earn it. The former figures are nearer the average salary paid.

In closing, I want to dwell on the difference between the boys of the old days and those of the present time. I must say they also have changed with the times—the comparison not being in favor of the "New Boy," of which there are many kinds. Some keep tally of the hours from the time they arrive in the morning, figuring how little they can do and how soon lunch time will come around; after that they continue their figuring and speculate on the time for closing the store. Some young men "know it all" and can learn nothing; others want to begin at the top and drop down instead of climbing up to stay; many want to start as buyer or junior partner, and the great majority must be reminded time and again of their duties. Few make an extra turn, or look for something to do, and rarely do anything but what they are told to do.

To all such the book business is a doomed calling. For the opposite type the calling offers a fair chance for a comfortable living, with a sandwich diet and now and

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then a little pie. To a favored few it offers a Delmonico diet, with now and then a little gout.

### THE IMPORTER

Mr. Ernst Lemcke, senior member of the firm of Lemcke & Buechner, ably represented the importer in the following address:

The first question can be answered only by one who has tried both publishing and retailing, while the importer is mainly a retailer, covering perhaps a wider field. The weight of the evidence is in favor of the publisher, however, for I could name no retailer of the eminence which some of our publishing firms have attained.

Not having tried any other than a bookseller's calling, I pass the second question, to say in answer to the third: What is the outlook?—not very encouraging. The volume of business is increasing, the profits growing smaller. Competition among dealers—and I have to contend also with the so-called "pauper" labor of all Europe—and the craze for cheapness among buyers have gone farther than they should. The "our price" advertisements show a degradation of our trade which bodes no good. Superior knowledge, efficient work, better facilities command no better prices than the department stores are training bookbuyers to pay. It is long since that Henry Ward Beecher came to me for a "Stieler's Atlas," and in selecting one directed it to be sent to him with the remark, "But I do not expect the clergyman's discount." Still, better times are expected, if they are not here already. It is high time they should strike us. But even of greater importance are better prices, and retailers and publishers should unite for the purpose of bringing about a reform in this direction.

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As to salaries, I am inclined to think that they are not as high as in other lines of trade. Book-selling offers no great prizes to the principals, being neither a speculative business to any great extent, nor capable of unlimited expansion; certainly mine is not.

Anticipating the last question, What encouragement is offered for advance? I believe that talent capable of creating new business need not go begging in our trade, while mere mechanical work is not underpaid to the extent some may think.

The question, Is it a good business for a young man to take up? tempts me to a fuller answer. There are sellers of books, and there are booksellers, a distinction worth making. To be a seller of books, merely, requires none but ordinary talents, application and industry. To become a bookseller in the old meaning of the word may presuppose a vocation. Not that booksellers are born, like poets; but a love of books is a requisite, which must be reinforced with literary instincts, broad culture, and in some lines good schooling, a knowledge of languages, ancient and modern, a smattering of many sciences, a retentive memory, together with the business instincts needed in any trade. There are many compensations for the lack of opportunity to make fortunes, such as the constant association with the greatest minds of all ages, the personal contact, often ripening into friendship, with the leading men of the time; at all times, at any rate, dealing with intelligent people. I take it that there is more satisfaction, even in the mechanical work of counting up a dozen copies of "Paradise Lost," if it ever sells by the dozen, than in measuring a dozen yards of half-inch silk ribbon. Not that the gentleman behind the department store counter is prevented from giving free vent to his imagination in picturing to himself the looks of his pretty lady customer bedecked with it. The bookseller's clerk,

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on the other hand, may have a chance minute to run his eye over a line or two of a great poem, and when he reads—"and then came Satan," his boss may put in his appearance to ask if the books are not yet ready for the packer.

During all that time I often thought I could give a readier answer to Horace's question in his famous first Satire than Mæcenas could, "How is it that nobody is contented with his calling, that everybody enviously wants his neighbor's place, the merchant the soldier's, the soldier the farmer's, and so on?" The contention seemed, indeed, miserable to me, that man is worth only what his bank account amounts to, nor seemed the envy and discontent quite so abject as Horace makes them, because others were richer. I could readily understand that so few rise satisfied from the board on which life's meal is spread and easily follow the poet's injunction to avoid dissipation and shun avarice, for there was nothing to practise avarice on, nor any "money to burn."

If I may be a little personal, I would say that I am not only of the old school, but of the old German school. I was duly apprenticed when fresh from college or *gymnasium*, and on that account enjoyed the privilege of a three, instead of a four, years' apprenticeship, without any pay or board. It was just after the time when in Germany the examination for booksellers' clerks, up to then rigorously enforced, had been abolished; otherwise I might have failed, and missed the opportunity of now addressing you. In due time I became a clerk and my first clerkship in Berlin yielded me in monthly salary what every one here would scorn to accept as weekly wages. Nor was I much better off at Braunschweig, where I received a call to Paris with \$25 a month, with a prospect of as much as \$40. I thought myself in clover. Thence I was engaged, for-



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tunately before the days of the contract labor law, as a clerk with the firm of which I now happen to be the head.

While I wish none of you to follow Horace practically, I will venture to recommend to our younger *confrères*, when Klondike and Wall Street seem to offer such easily-won prizes, to bear in mind, first, what *The Publishers' Weekly* prints in every number, namely, Lord Bacon's sentiment: "I hold every man a debtor to his profession"—I trust you all know it by heart! and, also, how Emerson sums up the representative man Goethe: "His autobiography is the expression of the idea—now familiar to the world through the German mind, but a novelty to England, Old and New, when the book appeared—that man exists for culture, not for what he can accomplish, but for what can be accomplished in him. The reaction of things on the man is the only noteworthy result. Though he wishes to prosper in affairs, he wishes more to know the history and destiny of man."

Our trade is not without its honors, though they are not of the showy or worldly kind. We have seen raised to the peerage in England ale brewers, bankers, such as the German families of the Rothschilds and Barings—Lords Revelstoke and Cromer—poets and scientists such as Tennyson and Lord Kelvin, but I recall no English publisher or bookseller thus distinguished, though the owner of the English railway book-stalls, W. H. Smith, died a cabinet minister. In France the rosette of the legion of honor may be seen in many a publisher's coat lapel; in Germany the lowest grade of the rank of counsellor—*Commissionsrath*—is occasionally bestowed on a successful publisher; the president of the German booksellers' association has even been raised one peg higher, to *Commerzienrath*; nay, a couple of Berlin and Vienna publishers were raised to the

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nobility, and B. Tauchnitz was created a baron by the Duke of Saxe-Coburg, Queen Victoria's brother-in-law. Here we have had tanners and rail-splitters in the presidential chair, but, as a rule, we are satisfied with being booksellers, pure and simple.

### THE TRAVELLER

Following are the remarks of Mr. F. H. Marling, of Charles Scribner's Sons, who was called upon to speak for the Traveller:

I wish that some more representative man had been chosen to speak on this subject to-night, as I am only an "*occasional*" traveller, a large part of my duties being inside the store. I do not class myself, therefore, as a typical "drummer"—one who devotes himself entirely to it, and is a pure and simple example of the profession. . . . In answering the question, "Is the Book Trade a Profitable Profession for a Young Man?" from a traveller's point of view I shall treat the question pro and con, summing up the advantages of the traveller's position first, and afterward taking up its disadvantages.

I have put both of these under three simple and obvious heads, viz.: physical, mental, and moral advantages.

(1) *Physical Advantages*.—A young man can, as a rule, command a larger salary as a traveller than in any "inside" position. Unless he is a manager, buyer, cashier, and confidential man, he is generally paid more than those who stay at home. The positions of entry clerk, stock clerk, retail salesman, packer, etc., are not so remunerative as that of the traveller.

Not only does the traveller command a larger salary, but he is more likely to have that salary increased. In

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his work—that is, if he is successful—the results can be directly traced, and his firm has positive evidence of his value to them. His expenses, also, are smaller. This is especially the case with a single man, whose expenses for board and lodging are all paid on the road, and who is therefore enabled to save money—a very weighty consideration for a young man.

The traveller generally lives well. The position he has to maintain, as the representative of his house, requires him to stay at the best hotels, where he enjoys a good table and room, and to travel in the most comfortable way. So that in these respects he often fares better than those who remain at home. As to clothing, the anecdote of the commercial traveller who always got a suit of clothes out of each of his trips, whether it appeared in the account of expenses or not, is too well known, and illustrates this point so pertinently that I need not enlarge upon it.

(2) *Mental Advantages*.—There is no doubt that the work of a traveller sharpens his wits. He comes in contact with all kinds of characters, his knowledge of human nature is increased, and, if intelligent, he cannot fail to learn tact and skill in dealing with men.

The whole effect is that of broadening his horizon, lifting him up out of routine methods, and enabling him to take larger and broader business views.

The change and variety of his life is also a mental advantage. He continually moves from place to place, and is constantly meeting with new incidents and faces. This saves him from the monotony of the work of many inside men, who, if bookkeepers, are chained down to the drudgery of endless figures; or if entry clerks, stock clerks, or retail salesmen, have only a limited round in which to employ their energies.

(3) *Moral Advantages*.—The traveller's duties are favorable to the cultivation of certain qualities, which

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may be defined as moral qualities, although the line between mental and moral is sometimes hard to define. Qualities that certainly should be possessed by them are patience, and its companion, perseverance. How often he is put off and put off and made to wait his customers' convenience! How often the appointments he makes are broken, or he is put aside for some reason or other. If a traveller has not patience he may as well quit at once.

Then, again, there is no doubt that he learns moral courage and self-reliance. The abnormal development of moral courage is "cheek," so called. This is often carried to an undue extreme, and subjects the traveller to severe criticism; but the quality of nerve is a most indispensable one, and he is required to exercise it every day.

Furthermore, his position should tend to develop independence and decision of character. He has often to make decisions on business matters, with no one to lean upon or to advise him. In this and other ways the manly elements in his character are strengthened and brought out.

There is a keen joy, also, in meeting with success—after a hard day's work, and when a big order, or batch of orders, is landed. Then a moral satisfaction is felt akin to that of the soldier after a hard-fought fight, when victory has perched on his banners.

I must now consider the disadvantages of a traveller's position.

(1) *Physical Disadvantages*.—The absence from home entailed by a traveller's life is a very serious drawback to it. To men of domestic inclinations it is a great deprivation to be separated for weeks or months from their families, and this with some interferes very materially with the enjoyment they would otherwise feel in their daily work.

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The constant travelling and moving round is wearing on the nervous system. Catching trains at all hours of the day and night in all kinds of weather, sleeping on the cars, putting up at all kinds of hotels, and often being in very cold or very hot rooms, etc., these are not always delightful experiences, and the traveller requires to be a "tough" man physically to stand all the trying conditions to which he is subjected.

The labor of packing and unpacking his trunks, especially when he makes short stops of one day in a town, is no slight one, and he has also frequently to work late at night copying out his orders. In fact, the traveller's position is no sinecure—he is a hard-worked man, and certainly earns every dollar of his salary.

(2) *Mental Disadvantages*.—The feeling of responsibility for results is a serious one for a traveller. He knows that much is expected of him by his firm, and if he meets with poor success he suffers from depression at times. On his trip he has always the thought that he must send in large orders, and the necessity of getting adequate returns is sometimes a considerable mental strain.

Another obvious disadvantage is the rude or indifferent treatment he is called upon to endure from many of his customers. Being a supplicant for orders, he has often to swallow his natural feelings of resentment when he or his firm is attacked, and by keeping his temper endeavor to win over some ugly or cranky man to his way of thinking.

A peculiar feature of the drummer's position is the fact that all the sins and mistakes of his house are visited on his devoted head, no matter whether he has had anything to do with them or not. It is very likely something over which he has no control, and belongs to an entirely different department of which he knows absolutely nothing—nevertheless, the grievances of the

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customers are all saved up, and the poor man gets all the growls and the kicks, because he is the only representative of the house they can get at. It is very exasperating to be soundly berated for something you have nothing to do with, and yet many an hour of a traveller's time is taken up with this sort of thing.

(3) *Moral Disadvantages*.—The temptations to dishonesty to misrepresent or take advantage of a customer are often strong. It frequently happens that the sale of a book hinges on the answer we make to a certain direct question. How hard it is then to be strictly truthful and to state the facts as they really are—not that it is a salesman's duty to call attention to the defects of his books—he should always make out the best case for them that is possible. But he is frequently in a position where he has to say yes or no on a special point, not only on the ground of moral honesty, but on the score of policy also. I hold that it does not pay to deceive a man in any way. If he finds it out you lose his confidence, and in the long run it will pay you to have him learn to rely upon the accuracy of your statements, and to know that when you promise a certain thing it will be done.

The temptations to drink and dissipation of all kinds are so well known to us all that it is not necessary to say much on this point. The freedom from the restraints of home and neighbors, the very character of the business, the "treating" in which many indulge, etc., all constitute very powerful temptations, which require exceptional moral principle to withstand. We are all sadly familiar with cases of men who have succumbed to these evils, and a young man bent on going on the road cannot be too earnestly or emphatically warned about these dangers. On the other hand, I am glad to believe that a better practice now prevails than was formerly the case. While there are some exceptions, it is

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possible to be a Christian gentleman, to abstain from all objectionable practices and yet be a successful traveller, retaining the respect, if not always the friendship, of customers. The average commercial traveller is of a higher grade than formerly.

In summing up, I would say that I have presented the two sides of the picture. It is for the young man to decide whether it will be profitable for him to be a traveller or not. If he be fond of home and family, and unhappy when away from them, he will hesitate long before he goes on the road, for the more successful he is the longer he will be kept upon it. And, although the salary may be larger, he will feel that he would rather have less money and be able to stay at home. On the other hand, if he is fond of excitement, movement, and change, and the active life of the road appeals to him strongly, he may be very happy and contented in it. It is a fact that on the average he can earn more money in this branch of the business than in most of the others. It is, however, a question for him to determine, whether the numerous drawbacks—which are attendant upon his work—are sufficient to offset this.

### THE SALESMAN

Mr. Frank Appel, of Brentano's, whose long experience in the retail book business entitled him to speak with authority, wound up the programme by giving the following views on the subject of the salesman:

The choice of a profession is a matter of considerable importance to every young man entering business life. The choice thus made at the outset of his career is liable to influence the whole of his future life; nothing comes nearer being truth than the trite saying, "A

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man's profession is the centre from which he views the world." In discussing the question as to whether the profession of bookselling is a profitable one for a young man to enter, it will first be necessary to give in outline what is expected of a good bookman, and learn therefrom what the qualities are of which he who enters the business must be the possessor.

It is of course expected that the young man intending to become a salesman in the book trade will, in the course of his school life, have acquired a good knowledge of English literature; it is also to be supposed that he is possessed of a well-developed mind. The first and elementary rule in bookselling is to obtain a complete mastery in the use of catalogues and any other bibliographical matter which may come to hand in the shape of publishers' announcements and trade journals. The proper use of catalogues is the foundation of a bookseller's education—they are his vade-mecum; the bookselling profession is one long and continuous apprenticeship in the use of catalogues and publishers' announcements.

He next learns the proper care of stock; this is a most essential point, as a great deal of valuable time is often lost by reason of stock being misplaced. He must, however, not be content with merely rubbing up and keeping in place such stock as is entrusted to his care; he must inform himself of the contents of the volumes he handles and must know how to place them most temptingly before the possible customer.

He is expected to keep in touch with the fads, the isms and ologies of the day, and should be able to talk intelligently on almost any given subject with his customer, it makes no difference whether the subject be golf or tennis, or the latest venture in the domain of abstract philosophy.

The book salesman should be a good judge of human nature; he should be able by the use of a few adroit



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questions to find out in what particular field of literature his customer is most interested. He should be able to discuss the latest novel, or the merits of Bob Ingersoll's last lecture; in fact, he should be capable of acting as the literary guide of his customers, for it is a fact, although perhaps not generally known, that fifty per cent. of the bookbuying public follow the advice of the salesman in the establishment where they are in the habit of buying their literary wares.

The bookselling trade is one in which no drones are tolerated; the book clerk is an incessant worker. Unlike his brother in other lines of business, his work does not end with the closing of the store at 6 P.M. It is then that the work of preparing for the morrow's business begins. It is in the evening that he must make himself acquainted with what is occurring in the world, and must prepare himself to recommend the best literature on any subject attracting public attention, be that subject the massacre of the Armenians by the cruel Turk, or the passage of the Dingley tariff bill.

It is after the shop is closed that he looks over the trade journals and makes himself acquainted with the titles of, and particulars regarding, new books about to be issued. That this is no light task can easily be understood by merely glancing over the Fall Announcement Number of *The Publishers' Weekly* with its 1500 or 1600 titles of books just issued, or about to be issued. It will be seen that the book salesman should be possessed of a high order of intelligence.

What is given him in return for all that is expected? I find that the salaries paid to book salesmen rarely average more than twenty dollars per week; and while this amount compares favorably with the sums paid salesmen in other lines of business, I do not think it is a fair salary for the quality of the work required.

What Froude said regarding the salaries paid to authors can, I think, be said with equal justification re-

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garding the salaries paid to bookmen. He says, "It is probably the only line of business in which the salaries are not paid in proportion to the good work done."

But is it right to judge of the profitableness of a calling merely from the dollars and cents standpoint? I think not. It is true the money consideration must always remain the principal one, for the bookman requires a certain amount of food and must be clothed just the same as other mortals. I know of no other trade, however, in which the opportunities for self-improvement and education are so many or so great as in the book trade.

A bookman with a well-developed mind, and possessed with a love of his calling, should be able to extract considerable pleasure and profit from his profession. Take it all in all, I think there are worse callings than that of the bookseller. We have heard much nonsense lately about the decay of the old bookseller and the incompetency of the average book clerk of the present.

It may be true that the bookseller of to-day does not possess the same knowledge of the technicalities of his business as did his brother of forty years ago; but have you stopped to consider what a difference there is in the output of the press to-day and that of forty years ago? While then books were issued at the rate of a few hundred a year, they now leave the press at the rate of thousands. We are continually reminded of the alleged stupid, and in some cases ridiculous, errors made by book clerks. Our critics tell us of the clerk who, on being asked for a copy of "Lamb's Tales," looked at the customer, and with a most disdainful air informed him that there was a butcher but a few doors above. They tell us of another who, on being asked for a copy of "Pepys' Diary," attempted to sell the customer a blank-book, with printed headings on each page and known as the "Excelsior Diary." These and many

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other ridiculous stories do they tell us, but somehow we never hear of the blunders made on the other side of the fence.

I know of a member of the book trade who has for some years made a practice of gathering together in one scrap-book records of the blunders made by bookmen, and in a separate volume those made by the people who frequent the book-stores. I hope some day to see these records published in printed form, for I think they will make a most interesting reply to those pessimists whose chief aim appears to be to make their profession ridiculous in the eyes of the world.

I think it rests entirely with ourselves whether our chosen calling is to be a profitable one or not.

F. E. Grant, the well-known bookseller of New York City, was induced by the committee to take part in the discussion, which he did in a happily humorous manner, though he did not directly answer the question. Mr. Grant dwelt on the discontent of the bookseller, and pointed out that there would be no relief until the booksellers made a united effort—similar to that made by the German book trade—to rid their system of the evils which now beset it. He favored the net price, with a discount of twenty or twenty-five per cent. to the bookseller. He would exclude the department stores and itinerant book butchers from the privileges of a bookseller, and abolish altogether the discount to the customer excepting on large accounts, in which cases the discount should be a merely nominal one. He would advise a young man whose aim it was to make money not to enter

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the book trade. Mr. Grant interspersed his remarks with a number of good stories, which aptly reinforced and clinched the arguments he wished to impress upon his hearers.

The president, Mr. A. Growoll, closed the discussion, which was so intensely interesting that, upon general request, the papers were reprinted in pamphlet form and distributed gratuitously.

### *MOCK BOOK AUCTION*

The November "Smoker" was taken up with a Mock Book Auction, that afforded much amusement and added \$45 to the treasury. Much of the success of the entertainment was due to Mr. S. Raines of Brentano's, who impersonated Mr. Charles E. Butler, who had been announced as the auctioneer. Mr. Raines was equally successful in exciting the curiosity of his hearers, so that they were induced to outbid one another at such a rate that the amount realized on the whole lot averaged about \$1.50 per volume. The whole "plant" for the auction was invented and put up by Mr. W. H. Parker, the efficient chairman of the Entertainment Committee.

### *CAN THE BOOKTRADE COMPETE WITH THE DEPARTMENT STORE?*

At the "Smoker" held January 12, 1898, at the Gramercy Lyceum the League discussed the ques-

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tion: "Can the Booktrade Compete with the Department Store?" Mr. W. H. Parker, of E. P. Dutton & Co., read a capital paper on the subject, taking a hopeful view of the situation.

Mr. E. W. Dayton, who could not be present, sent an abstract of the paper he had hoped to present, which was read by the secretary, Mr. Burkhardt. Mr. Dayton was not confident that the bookseller could successfully compete with the department store unless he resorted to co-operative buying of stock.

Mr. S. F. McLean, who spoke at length on the question, viewing it on all sides, thought that intelligent booksellers could always hold their own against the department stores.

Mr. John J. Daly, humorously, though trenchantly illustrated department methods, which he thought were "filling but not satisfying," and urged booksellers to organize themselves in order to meet this kind of competition more successfully than they were able to do single-handed. Other speakers were Messrs. A. Dwight Stratton and Desmond Fitz Gerald, and encouraging letters were read from Messrs. David McKay, J. Lamont Perkins, Samuel H. Putnam and S. E. Bridgman.

### *EUCHRE PARTY*

At the February "Smoker," held at the Gramercy Lyceum, on the 9th, another euchre party occupied the evening. The prizes were a hand-

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some alligator bag, a fountain pen and a silver-backed brush and comb. During a half-hour's intermission Mr. Thorn read an original unpublished story that was well received by the League.

### *THIRD ANNUAL MEETING*

The third annual meeting of the League was held on March 9, at the Gramercy Lyceum. Owing to the absence of the president, Mr. A. Growoll, the first vice-president, Mr. John A. Holden, called the meeting to order. The secretary's report showed the League to be in a prosperous condition, thirty new members having been elected to membership during the year.

The election of president resulted in the choice of Mr. Charles A. Burkhardt. At the March meeting of the Board of Managers, Mr. S. Edgar Briggs was elected first vice-president; Mr. F. H. Marling, second vice-president; Mr. S. F. McLean, secretary, and Mr. Brigham, treasurer.

The guest of the evening was Mr. Richard Le Gallienne who happily expressed his gratitude for the hospitality that had been bestowed upon him. "It would be well," Mr. Le Gallienne said, "if the men who make books and the men who sell them could get together more frequently for mutual exchange of grievances and opinions." Mr. Le Gallienne on this occasion was elected an honorary member of the League.

At this time was shown the first dissatisfaction

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with the quarters in which the League held its meetings. It was proposed to raise the annual dues in order to enable the Board of Managers to secure permanent quarters. A vote of the Board of Managers showed twenty-five in favor of such a measure, and only one who was in favor of continuing on the old lines. The matter was then allowed to rest on the "table."

#### *THIRD ANNUAL DINNER*

The third Annual Dinner was given at the St. Denis Hotel on the evening of April 5. The attendance was good, notwithstanding the fact that a number of circumstances conspired against it. In the first place, the event unfortunately occurred in Holy Week, during which a number of the members of the League feel obliged to absent themselves from places of amusement; secondly, the threatened war with Spain called away a certain contingent, who were obliged to report nightly for drill; in the third place, the snowstorm and bad weather during the day frightened off many of the out-of-town members; and last, but by no means least, it was discovered that not a few of the members of the League were "on the road" at that season of the year. As it was there were 100 persons present, including the following guests and speakers: Messrs. Henry Holt; Gilman H. Tucker, of the American Book Co.; E. L. Dillingham, of the subscription department of

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Charles Scribner's Sons; Melville E. Stone, Jr., of Herbert S. Stone & Co., of Chicago; Robert Barr, Richard Le Gallienne, and George A. Fleming, who favored the company with several songs.

To Mr. Henry Holt, the first speaker, was assigned the discussion of the subject of "General Book Publishing." After scoring the novel "drunks" and the discount "drunks," Mr. Holt asked, "How would it do not to have any discounts at all?—to have a price for a single book, a price for a dozen—assorted if you please—a price for fifty—a hundred—a thousand? That would seem to me nearer the general laws of trade. Then a publisher would sell pick-ups at the single book price, but at the end of the month he would make the allowance for the dozen prices, the ten thousand price, according to the customers purchasing for the month. Retailers and jobbers would compete—they always will. But there's a magic—sometimes a baneful magic—in words, and I should not be surprised if we would be better off if we were rid of that word discount altogether. Then retailers would fix their own prices according to time, place and circumstance. Books would cost more in San Francisco than in New York, of course, but there would not be a new lie spread over the world in the price of every new book."

Mr. S. Edgar Briggs, the manager of the New York branch of the Fleming H. Revell Company,



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read an interesting paper on Religious Book Publishing; Mr. Gilman H. Tucker of the American Book Company discussed School Book Publishing; and Mr. Edward L. Dillingham of the subscription book department of Charles Scribner's Sons read a paper on Subscription Book Publishing.

Messrs. Robert Barr, the author of "One Day's Courtship," etc., and Richard Le Gallienne spoke informally in praise of the bookseller, Mr. Barr making the bold statement that "any fool can write a book, but it takes a man of brains to sell one." Mr. Le Gallienne, however, dissented from this view. He said he began life by balancing books—balanced them more or less deftly for seven years. Then he took to writing books, and found that very hard work. He hoped some time to be able to sell books.

Mr. Melville E. Stone, Jr., of the firm of Herbert S. Stone & Co., of Chicago, spoke briefly on Western Book Publishing, regretting that so little could be said at present in favor of literary activity in Chicago. He closed his remarks by paying a neatly turned and well-deserved compliment to the devotion of the late General A. C. McClurg to the best interests of literature in the West.

In the absence of Mr. John Brisben Walker, Mr. Frank N. Doubleday, then of Doubleday & McClure, volunteered to say a few words on the subject of trials and tribulations of Magazine

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Publishing, endorsing heartily the legend chosen from Bulwer by the Committee of Arrangements —“Did I publish all I admire, out of sympathy with the author, I should be a ruined man.”

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APRIL, 1898—MARCH, 1899

AT the April "Smoker," held at the Lenox Lyceum (formerly the Gramercy Lyceum), on April 13, Mr. William Launder discussed "Bookbinding—Past and Present," and Mr. Robert Rutter spoke on "Commercial Bookbinding." The talks were illustrated by a small exhibition of artistically bound books and specimens making clear technical points referred to by the speakers.

### *COMPLIMENTARY DINNER*

A "Complimentary Dinner" was given by the League on the evening of May 18 at the Zangheri Restaurant, which proved to be an enjoyable and quite successful affair. The League was exceptionally favored by fine weather that brought out over one hundred members and their friends. Among the guests were Dr. Thomas Dunn English, Messrs. Rossiter Johnson, S. M. Marvin, of Charles Scribner's Sons, and Rear-Admiral Bancroft Gherardi, U. S. N. The first speaker was

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Mr. Rossiter Johnson, who in a very happy vein gave his early experiences as a journalist. In closing he read, by request, "The Triumph of Robert McGinnis," from his book of sketches, entitled "The End of a Rainbow."

Mr. Marvin, the next speaker, contrasted the old methods of making books with those that obtain now, and regretted that in the transition some of the advantages of the old had either been entirely lost or bid fair eventually to disappear. This, he thought, was especially true of wood-engraving. In concluding, he urged upon his hearers the desirability of fostering the sentiment of fellowship, not only among themselves, but with all allied societies whose aim and ideal it is to elevate the standard of their profession.

Dr. English, the statesman, journalist, and author of the favorite ballad, "Ben Bolt," etc., though in poor health, nevertheless succeeded in holding the attention of his audience from beginning to end, and richly earned the generous applause with which he was hailed when he rose and when he concluded his talk. Dr. English for over sixty years had taken an active and at times a prominent part in the development of the literature and politics of this country. Naturally he had come in contact with many men of note, of the traits and characteristics of some of whom he gave interesting thumb-nail sketches. He alluded to the development of modern magazine

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literature which, in Philadelphia, grew out of *The Casket* and *Burton's Magazine*, semi-eclectic publications, and had its culmination in *Graham's Magazine*, which he considered as the pioneer of the present-day periodicals devoted entirely to original reading matter and illustrations. In recalling the New York *Mirror*, edited by N. P. Willis, George P. Morris, and Theodore Sedgwick Fay, he reminded his hearers that Mr. Fay still lived in Berlin, at the ripe age of ninety-one. This was, we believe Dr. English's last appearance in public.

Admiral Gherardi, one of the heroes of the battle of Mobile Bay, gave an interesting talk on the changes in the navy from the time when, in 1846, he entered the service as midshipman on board the *Ohio* until the present day. On the conclusion of his talk he was enthusiastically cheered.

The speeches were interspersed with the singing of patriotic songs by the League.

## TROLLEY PARTY

The second annual Trolley Ride given by the League to its members on July 9 was a success in spite of the bad weather in the morning, which kept many from going. Promptly at two o'clock enough members and their friends—including six of the gentler sex—to fill one car took the

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Staten Island boat at the foot of Whitehall Street for St. George, where a car was waiting. The trip was direct to Midland Beach, where the party spent over two hours. Before returning home Mr. Douglas photographed the company in groups and also altogether in the car. Leaving Midland Beach a more extended trip was taken along a route of the Midland Trolley, returning to St. George. The weather cleared up shortly before the ride began, so that there was nothing to mar the comfort and enjoyment of the party, which got back to New York at 8 o'clock in the evening.

### *INAUGURATION OF MONTHLY DINNERS*

Since the successful dinner given at the Zangheri Restaurant, the Entertainment Committee, at the suggestion of the Board of Managers, strove to provide a similar entertainment in place of the "Smokers" given until then. The committee encountered considerable difficulty in securing suitable accommodations. As a makeshift they finally made arrangements with the "J. B. G.," a French restaurant at 111 W. Twenty-fifth Street, near Sixth Avenue, in the heart of the "tenderloin," and gave its first dinner in that malodorous establishment on the evening of September 14. Again the irrepressible good spirit of its members and the high character of the entertainment provided by its committee helped the

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League to temporarily forget its peculiar and unattractive surroundings. After the coffee had been served, the president, Mr. Charles A. Burkhardt, called attention to the fact that in order to continue the work of the League, and to provide more liberally for the entertainment of its members than in the past, it would be necessary to raise the annual dues. Before the discussion of the subject Mr. Paul B. du Chaillu was induced to address a few remarks to the League. The famous explorer was in a delightfully happy humor and was generously applauded. Mr. W. H. Parker then moved that the annual dues of the League should hereafter be fixed at \$5 a year, payable semi-annually in advance on the first days of April and October. The motion was unanimously adopted. Mr. Volney Streamer was then induced to recite, which he did with usual success. After short speeches from Mr. Shoemaker, of Philadelphia, and others, the sitting adjourned.

On October 12, the League again had its dinner at the "J. B. G." restaurant. After the dinner twenty-eight of the members remained to make up a progressive euchre party. Nine games were played, seven members making a uniform score—six games won, three games lost. As the hands of the clock were pointing to eleven it was agreed to cut for the first and second

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prizes instead of playing off. The first prize was a pearl and gold scarf pin, and the second prize, gold sleeve links. The "booby," was a negro doll and went to the player who had succeeded in losing every game.

At the November dinner, also given at the "J. B. G.," the artists F. Reuderdahl and Dan. C. Beard, Frank N. Doubleday and Charles E. Wingate gave enjoyable talks.

On February 15, 1899, the League gave another dinner at the "J. B. G." On that occasion Mr. Ernest Dressel North discoursed entertainingly on old and rare books. He considered the subject from the point of view of the dealer and also of the collector, under the following heads: Fading Fads, Famous Fields, Private Libraries in Greater New York, Vagaries of a Collector, Defence of Old Book Collecting, and Famous Hunting Grounds. Mr. North's remarks were followed by short talks from Messrs. E. W. Johnson, A. Growoll, John A. Holden, and others.

### *FOURTH ANNUAL MEETING*

The fourth annual meeting, held on March 3, was the last gathering in the purlieu of the demi-mondaine, the gambler and the foot-pad, much to the relief of the more unsophisticated



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members of the League who were frequently "held up" on their way to and from the meeting place. The report read at the fourth annual meeting showed that the League had 150 members in good standing, very few having withdrawn because of raise of dues. The chairman of the Employment Bureau, Mr. Charles E. Bonnell, reported that he had secured positions for thirty-six out of fifty-two applicants. Mr. W. H. Parker, the very able chairman, for two years, of the Entertainment Committee, was the League's choice for President. At a meeting of the Board of Managers held on March 7, the following officers were elected: First Vice-President, Mr. J. N. Wing; Second Vice-President, Mr. John A. Holden; Secretary, Mr. S. F. McLean; Treasurer, Mr. James B. Brigham.

An interesting episode of the evening was the sale by auction of the three designs made by Mr. H. T. Carpenter for the dinner card and programme to be used at the dinner of the League to be held on March 15. Mr. Frank Appel acted as auctioneer and succeeded in disposing of them at good prices.

### *FOURTH ANNUAL DINNER*

The fourth annual dinner was held on the evening of March 15 at the rooms of the Aldine and Uptown Association, at 111 Fifth Avenue. Although the weather was again, or, one might

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say, as usual, wretched, the dinner was well attended—upwards of one hundred members and their guests being present—and was altogether an enjoyable occasion. The room in which the dinner was given was cosy, the dinner was well served, and the speaking, most of it extemporaneous, was as happy as it was instructive. The President, Mr. W. H. Parker, introduced the speaking by reviewing briefly the work of the League.

### ADVERTISING

Mr. Francis A. Crowninshield, then the manager of the advertising department of Dodd, Mead & Co., responded in a most entertaining manner to the toast "Advertising," to which was attached the following motto from Addison: "The great art of writing advertisements is the finding out the proper method to catch the reader's eye." Mr. Crowninshield considered the subject under the following heads: *Posters*, the craze for which he thought was dead, though the type-poster printed in two colors was still an effective way of catching "the reader's eye;" *Circulars*, he thought, were no longer used except in making propaganda for special books; *Review copies* he considered good advertising, though in his experience only about fifty per cent. of the copies sent out are adequately noticed by the press; *Magazine advertising* he considered the

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best and most important. Among other and more insidious advertising he mentioned the paying of an enormous sum to a prominent author for writing a book.

### THE LITERARY AGENT

Mr. Paul R. Reynolds, the well-known literary agent, who was introduced in the words of Wotton, quoted in the *menu*, "I am but a gatherer and disposer of other men's stuff," in discussing the Literary Agent in his *Relations to the Publisher and Author*, maintained that the literary agent in bringing the author and publisher together performs a necessary function, and one that is just as important in producing the complete book as that of the printer or binder. He compared the work of the literary agent to that of the real estate agent who brings lessor and tenant together, and contended that it is to the advantage of the author to place his manuscript in the hands of a man who knows what publishers it would be most likely to suit, and who also knows the value of such a manuscript, how to approach and deal with the publisher, how to draw up a contract, and how to ascertain the business standing of any house in the trade. He cited several cases in which authors who had dealt directly with publishers had suffered because of the lack of the special knowledge which the agent is presumed to possess. Mr. Reynolds also

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spoke of the advantages that accrue to the publisher in dealing with the agent; among them, that of being able to decline an undesirable manuscript without giving offence to an author, because of his identity being concealed. He admitted, however, that many publishers did not regard the agent as a necessity.

Mr. Gilbert Ray Hawes, senior member of the law firm of Hawes & Norman, of New York, read a paper on Literature and the Law, which he concluded by relating a number of stories to prove that literature is indebted to the law for many of its best anecdotes and wittiest sayings.

Mr. John H. Dingman, of Charles Scribner's Sons, the dean of the retail book trade in New York, gave an interesting talk on How Books were Sold in Earlier Times.

## THE OLD BOOK TRADE

Mr. George H. Richmond, responding to the toast of "Old Books," disclaimed the assertion of the toast-master that he was a "book expert." He believed that no man could claim to be an all-around book expert and tell the truth at the same time. He knew of but one man who approached the ideal, and yet he, in publishing a bibliography that for many years has been justly regarded as an authority, made a mistake and a misstatement in each of the first two titles of that book. Mr. Richmond said that while he did not lay undue

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stress on his modesty, he was thankful that he had learned early in life not to be too sure nor to know too much. He explained that he was not born in the business; he did not become a bookseller until he failed as a lawyer. He then entered the employ of a bookseller in Baltimore, and almost on the first day he discovered that he had considerable to learn before he could fill the position to his own and his employer's satisfaction. Mr. Richmond naturally had much to say about collectors, on the buying of rare books, on the rise in values, etc., all of which he entertainingly elaborated with personal recollections and experiences. In concluding, he agreed with Mr. Dingman that the bookseller—especially the dealer in old books—was in advance of his predecessor, at least so far as a knowledge of the values of books was concerned. The day of picking up a bargain on the shelves of a dealer in second-hand books was a thing of the past, no matter where the bookseller had his home. Yet he did not think that was a misfortune, because the knowledge of the individual was bound to elevate the standard of the whole trade.

Incidental entertainment was furnished by Mr. Charles B. Hawley, the famous basso and composer, Mr. Barclay Dunham, a tenor of some reputation, and by the Manhattan Symphony Instrumental Quintet.

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APRIL, 1899—MARCH, 1900

THE April dinner, in 1899, was given at the League's new quarters, at the New Amsterdam Hotel, southeast corner of Fourth Avenue and Twenty-first Street. The new rooms assigned to the League were homelike—almost gorgeous compared with those in which its dinners had hitherto been given—the dinner was excellent and well served, and the literary programme was highly interesting.

At a meeting of the Board of Managers, held earlier in the evening, ten new members were elected. The dinner committee reported a deficit of a little over \$25, which was fifteen dollars less than the year before, and the treasurer reported a balance of over \$250. It was again taken for granted that the League was more than holding its own, and that its ideal—to come into possession of a home of its own—was not so visionary as it was even a year before. Appropriate resolutions of regret at the death of Mr. W. W.

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Howe, one of the organizers of the League, were drafted and passed.

After the coffee had been served, the president, Mr. W. H. Parker, introduced Mr. H. S. Hutchinson, of New Bedford, Mass., who spoke most entertainingly of his experiences. Mr. Hutchinson, among other things said that the business now carried on by him was established by his father, in 1864, for the sale of school-books and school supplies. There was money in school-books then. In those days they also made their own ink—in the back of the store—and sold it at a dollar a gallon. There was one drawback. In those days clergymen had their extra discount, and every school ma'am had her extra ten per cent.; between them and those who had no discounts at all the bookseller was kept busy guessing.

Continuing, Mr. Hutchinson said:

One of my early recollections of bookselling carries me back to the time when "Helen's Babies," "That Husband of Mine," and "That Wife of Mine," were published. On the day the latter was published the sidewalk in front of A. K. Loring's store in Boston was blocked with people eager to pay fifty cents for a book which to-day we might have difficulty in selling for ten cents.

In 1883, when I assumed charge of the business, one-third of our annual sales was school-books. In 1884, when Massachusetts passed the first Free Text-Book Law, we tried our hand at supplying the cities and towns, and had more funny experiences with school

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committees than profit in doing business. Owing to the loss of so large a part of my retail business, I began to look around and commenced to add other lines. At that time we sold only books, stationery, and a very few periodicals. We have carried on a circulating library since the sixties, and still continue it, with a circulation of about 25,000 a year, at one cent a day. We now add about 400 periodicals a month, and take subscriptions for them when they have circulated a month. By doing this, and by keeping up with the latest fiction, we have held on to the business, notwithstanding paper novels and ten-cent magazines.

About 1892-3 competition was pretty strong, and we were beginning to feel the effects of Boston Sunday newspaper advertising and cheap book catalogues distributed through the mails, so we looked around again, and this time found a man in the music and picture-framing business, with a store and a lease. This we purchased, and added it to our business, although he advised us, after the sale, to get out of the music part of it; but we hung on, and are "still in it." About this time we also added a news-stand and a department of artists' materials.

As I visited other cities, I looked about, and decided that the Department Store idea was a good one. Many lines of goods give business all the time. My clerks ten years ago didn't have anything to do during January, February, March, July, and August when we had only the book business. Now something is going every month, and I feel that the bookseller's salvation lies in selling something at a profit, so that he can afford to continue in the finest profession in existence—the art of selling books.

In speaking most interestingly of his visit to Cuba, Mr. Hutchinson said that strangely enough



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he had run across many bookstores in Havana, but they were all small and dark, and stocked principally with second-hand French and Spanish books. D. Appleton & Co. seem to be represented by a branch store that displays their firm-name conspicuously. It is by far the most progressive bookstore in Havana, and is presided over by a Cuban who speaks English fairly well. In one small, dingy old bookshop near his hotel—The Pasaje—Mr. Hutchinson found this sign:

NO BOOKS READ HERE.

THIS SHOP TOO SMALL.

In closing, Mr. Hutchinson gave it as his opinion that the business outlook in Cuba is most satisfactory; and that, as soon as a government is established that will command the respect and confidence of business men generally, a large and profitable commerce in many lines will be opened up with the United States.

Mr. Hutchinson's remarks were heartily applauded, and the conclusion of his cheerful reminiscences left everybody in good humor and quite ready to enjoy all that was to follow.

As the salesmen who were expected to tell "big stories" of their sales were conspicuous by their absence, this part of the programme was

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filled up by a number of volunteers who told stories of sales that others had made, and so the evening was pleasantly passed until the hour hand of the clock had fairly reached eleven.

At the May dinner, given on the 10th of that month at the New Amsterdam Hotel, Mr. E. H. Mullin read a lengthy, but thoroughly enjoyable, paper on "English Novelists of the Second Rank, 1850-1875," which was printed in full in *The Publishers' Weekly* for May 13, V. 55, No. 1424, pages 780-783.

### TROLLEY PARTY

On June 24 the League gave a Trolley Party to sixty of its members to Far Rockaway, L. I. The party started from New York at 2 P. M. and again had a pleasant time.

At the September dinner, held at the New Amsterdam Hotel on the 13th, Mr. A. Growoll delivered an address on "Bookbinding from a Historical and Practical Standpoint."

On the 11th of October the League was obliged to remove its headquarters to "The Chelsea," an apartment hotel on Twenty-third Street, west of Eighth Avenue. On that occasion the members were treated to an instructive talk on "Book Illustrating Historically Considered," by Mr. Ernest Knaufft, who illuminated his lecture with

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a number of drawings. Mr. Knaufft began with the illumination of the leaves of the Book of the Dead by the ancient Egyptians as the starting-point of book illustration, and defended his argument in a very clever manner. He then traced book illustration through the block books, the illumination, first by the scribes and afterward by mechanical means, of the printed books of the 15th and 16th centuries, in fact down to the invention, early in the 19th century, of the iron press. Mr. Knaufft followed the subject of engraving in a most instructive manner, from the time of Bewick down to the invention of modern photo-engraving and the other mechanical reproductive processes. He pointed out the remarkable fact that at the very moment when the art of wood-engraving seems doomed to extinction the most wonderful specimens of the wood-engraver's work were being produced by Cole. He closed his talk by explaining the different processes of woodcutting, engraving, and etching on wood, copper, and steel.

Beginning with its November dinner the League took up its quarters in the cosy room of the Aldine Association at Fifth Avenue and Eighteenth Street, where with one exception its regular sessions have been held until the present time. At the dinner held on November 15, the author of "America and the Americans," Mr.

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Price Collier, of Tuxedo, was to be present and tell how he came to write his book, but he failed to appear. In consequence of his absence the dinner was concluded with stories by Messrs. A. W. Vorse of G. P. Putnam's Sons, the Rev. Charles F. Cutter, and E. F. Treat of the *New England Bookseller*.

At the January dinner of the League, held at the rooms of the Aldine Association, on the evening of January 17, 1900, F. J. Pfister, a well-known New York bookbinder, delivered an interesting address on the art of decorating the covers of books by means of pyrography, or of "burning in" with a heated tool the design with which the cover of a book is to be decorated, instead of impressing it, either blind or gilded, with dies or the ordinary binders' tools.

### PYROGRAPHY

Mr. Pfister pointed out that pyrography is not a recent art, but an ancient process revived. In its more primitive form, it was applied by ancient and barbaric people in ornamenting their war clubs and weapons generally, as well as other implements used in more peaceful pursuits. What is known as pyrography, Mr. Pfister explained, is a process by which a design is burned into a smooth surface of wood, ivory, bone, leather, etc., with a glowing point of platinum. Wood was first decorated in this way, and some of the finest samples of the art of the present day are executed on

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white holly. The art has not been practiced by any distinct school, but first came into prominence in its present methods in Munich in 1884, and was taken up in Berlin and other German cities, the practical methods being kept more or less secret. It is now fully proved that the tool first used was a common poker heated in the kitchen stove. To-day this primitive tool has been superseded by a delicately-pointed platinum tool kept heated by burning benzine, and some of the results obtained, especially in the wood and leather imitations of mural painting, are astonishing even to the initiated.

The application of pyrography to bookbinding is of comparatively recent date, and as it is as yet chiefly accomplished by hand-work, it cannot be made available for commercial bookbinding. Mr. Pfister showed a copy of Octave Uzanne's "Sunshade, Glove and Muff" bound in pigskin and decorated by pyrography which was a beautifully artistic specimen of the process. He explained the special advantages of the art in binding single books with emblematical and special designs. Dies for this purpose cost enormously in the case of single books, while a design such as appeared on Uzanne's book could be obtained for \$35. Mr. Pfister then showed a book in process of binding. It was a "Memoir of Mary Robinson," the favorite of King Gregory iv. The portrait of the lady was traced in lead-pencil, and the design transferred by a simple process to the leather and traced by the fiery platinum point until it was permanently indented. It is a process soon acquired by any artist of talent, and the speaker thought it offered a good field for money-making.

Mr. Pfister also thought pyrography could be employed to advantage in wood-engraving at far less cost and with equally satisfactory results. He explained how he had formerly applied photogravure work

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to first editions of full-bound books, but that he now obtained the same results by pyrography, and ran far less risk of smutting and spoiling fine leathers and woods. The process enables the artist to obtain very fine shades of coloring. He thought that in time some of the wonderful effects in binding shown in the work of Bedford, Dent, Riviere, Cobden, Zaehnsdorf, Launder, Macdonald, Blackwell, and the host of modern binders would be obtained by this process of pyrography, which although an ancient art is still in its infancy as applied to modern requirements, and is capable of infinite artistic development.

Francis W. Halsey, then editor of the *New York Times' Saturday Review of Books and Art*, next entertained the League with a well-considered address on the function of the bookseller and critic in bringing to the attention of the people that which is good and noble and lasting in literature, and a review of literature in general.

### FIFTH ANNUAL DINNER

The Fifth Annual Dinner of the Booksellers' League was given at the rooms of the Aldine Association, on the evening of February 5. Nearly one hundred representatives of the book trade were present; all the speakers put in an appearance; the dinner, of seven courses, was excellent and promptly served, good feeling prevailed, and hence every one went home feeling that the evening had been profitably and agreeably spent.

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The post-prandial programme was introduced by the President, Mr. W. H. Parker, who said:

Five years ago, one stormy night, our first meeting was held; a can of tobacco and pipes enough to go around were provided for our entertainment. From that humble beginning, in unattractive surroundings, to this bountiful repast and these cosy, almost luxurious surroundings, what a change! And yet, our past has been one of much enjoyment and benefit, attended by but few discouragements. We have had many able speakers, who gave us of their knowledge; and we have had music, and song, and story; but, above all, we have drawn closer to each other and become intimate. A few years ago we were strangers, most of us, to one another; to-day we belong, as it were, to one happy family.

We would emphasize, on this occasion, for the benefit of the employers who may be present, that our organization's purpose is entirely different from that of similar organizations in other trades. While these are banded together, as a rule, to endeavor to get more money out of their employers without giving any more in return, the Booksellers' League has been striving to make better and more efficient help. Hence, every firm should give us their heartiest support.

Our membership is steadily growing, our finances are sufficient for our present needs, our meeting place is attractive, and the enthusiasm of our leader is unabated. I may therefore congratulate every member on his good fortune in belonging to the Booksellers' League.

Mr. W. B. Van Ingen, the first speaker, gave an interesting description of Japan and its people, in which he dwelt particularly on their honesty in

## THE BOOKSELLERS' LEAGUE

their intercourse with each other and with strangers. This characteristic, he thought, made the Japanese artist's work so attractive to the artist, especially in his development of the line which is never meaningless in Japanese art. He told a number of anecdotes to prove this.

Mr. Edwin Markham, author of "The Man with the Hoe," spoke on the subject of "Books and the Light They Have Given Me," though he opened his remarks by reminding his hearers that he could "but touch on his subject as a bird touches the ocean." The books that had influenced him most were the Veda and the Book of the Dead; the writings of Confucius and Mencius, or Meng-Tseu, the Chinese philosopher; Æschylus, Socrates, and Plato; Omar Khayyám, Dante, and Shakespeare, especially his "Tempest." Among the moderns, Shelley, Browning, Tennyson, Emerson, Hugo, and Goethe. From these he learned that "poetry is a universal language; religion is to be found in all religions; and that humanity, everywhere and in all ages, is the same. The study of literature breaks down all prejudices. It is the greatest power and force for the world's advancement, and in all ages, and under all conditions, has led the world's onward march."

Mr. Foster Crowell, formerly engineer of the United States Nicaragua Canal Survey, gave an interesting and edifying account of the difficul-



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ties to be overcome in completing the proposed Nicaragua Canal. By means of fine stereopticon views he gave his audience a vivid idea of the country and its people.

Mr. Ernest Seton-Thompson, who was under contract to complete a certain amount of work for *The Century* by the following morning, could only run in for a moment to keep his promise to tell a story, which he did most acceptably.

Mr. Barclay Dunham, well known to the trade, favored the company with a number of songs.

At the close of the entertainment each one present received as a souvenir a copy of Mr. Markham's "The Man with the Hoe," in which the author obligingly wrote his autograph. Another souvenir of the occasion was the artistic *menu* and programme. The front cover design of the booklet represented a bookshop of ye olden times in winter. The sign over the shop announced the Fifth Annual Dinner of the Booksellers' League. On the back of the cover was a dainty symbolical design of a little girl holding up an opened book to a bust resting upon a high pedestal. The cover paper was of a delicate green shade. The front cover design was printed in sepia and red, and was impressed upon the cover. The entire programme, including the design, was the work of Mr. H. T. Carpenter, one of the members of the League and presented by him as a gift to the League.

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### FIFTH ANNUAL MEETING

The fifth annual meeting of the League was held on March 14, at the Aldine Association. After the dinner, Mr. Price Collier wittily, and in a most entertaining manner, described how he came to write his severely-criticized book "America and Americans," and why the writing of such a book seemed to him necessary. It may be said here that while Mr. Collier is not blind to the shortcomings of his countrymen, and on many occasions courageously undertook to admonish them, he also proved his loyalty to his country in her need by serving in her navy during the Spanish-American war.

The report of the Board of Managers showed that the League numbered 135 members in good standing. The treasurer reported a balance of \$304.85. Mr. Bonnell, in charge of the Employment Bureau, reported as follows:

Applications for employment received,.....	162
Applications from employers for assistants,.....	85
Positions secured,.....	116

Of these 116 positions secured through the instrumentality of the League, not more than 5 per cent. were secured by members. This being the case, it was suggested that a nominal fee of not more than \$1.00 should be charged to those, not members of the League, after situations have

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been secured. The year before Mr. Bonnell reported, for the preceding year :

Applications from the trade for various assistants,..	33
Applications for positions,.....	52
Situations secured through the League,.....	36

It will be seen, therefore, that during the fifth year this department more than trebled its usefulness. The successful endeavors of this single department should warrant the continued hearty support of publishers and booksellers—alike the employer and the employee.

The election for president resulted in the unanimous choice of Mr. Charles E. Butler of Brentano's, one of the founders of the League and always most active in furthering its interests. At the meeting of the Board of Managers held on March 28, Mr. J. N. Wing was elected first vice-president, Mr. John A. Holden, second vice-president, Mr. S. F. McLean, secretary, and Mr. James B. Brigham, treasurer. At a later meeting of the Board of Managers held April 25, Mr. McLean resigned his office and Mr. W. H. Parker was elected secretary.

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APRIL, 1900—MARCH, 1901

AT the regular monthly meeting held on April 18, Mr. T. J. Vivian, a well-known journalist, the author of "With Dewey at Manila," and other books, gave to the uninitiated a graphic insight into the methods now in vogue in the making of a great daily newspaper. In a very concise and happy manner he described the duties of the chiefs of the various departments that form the executive board of the newspaper, then showed the system used in gathering news, how the matter was put into form, and outlined some of the difficulties confronting the editor in his selection of what to print and what to leave out.

Mr. Josiah C. Pumpelly entertainingly reviewed the past of the press, recalled the influence exerted by the "fourth estate" in great crises in England and in this country—by such giants as Swift, Coleridge, "Junius," Zenger, Thomas Paine and Horace Greeley—and ended with an appeal to the consciences of modern moulders

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of opinion to zealously guard their independence in order that they may be free to expose fraud and injustice no matter where and by whom committed.

These addresses, which were both most heartily applauded, were followed by a brief discussion in which Messrs. Cutter, Malkan, S. E. Briggs and Desmond Fitz Gerald took part.

The May dinner of the League, given at the rooms of the Aldine Association on the evening of the 16th of the month, was attended by upwards of seventy members and their friends. The president, Mr. Charles E. Butler, in a happy speech introduced Major J. B. Pond, who, instead of telling of the authors he had met, gave a most delightful talk about himself—describing life in the early forties in the West; the struggle of the pioneers of the anti-slavery movement; and the fight against Mormonism, which practically started Major Pond on his career as the manager of a lecturing bureau. Incidentally he gave brief sketches of some of the great men with whom he had come in contact—much of it told with a quaint, gentle humor, some of it shaded with pathos, even sadness. The speaker was encouraged again and again to continue and upon retiring was heartily applauded.

George J. Bryan, of Bryan, Taylor & Co., concluded the evening's entertainment happily with

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a talk on "Some Old Friends," in which he traced back to their approximate origin, two or three thousand years ago, the *bon mots* and good stories of the present day, proving by a number of well-chosen specimens that the stories over which the moderns laugh are identical almost in wording with those told by the wits in the days of Moses.

The Fall season of 1900 did not find the League in an enterprising mood. This was due to several causes, the principal one of which was the continued hot weather, and the many absences on account of vacations until nearly the end of September. Hence, the first dinner of the season was not given until October 10, at the Aldine Association. On this occasion Mr. Nixon Waterman, author of "A Book of Verse," delivered a "Talk on Things of Pleasant Interest," and Professor Isaac Taylor Headland, of the Peking University, delivered an address on "Literature as an Element in the Present Chinese Reform Movement."

At the November dinner Mr. Louis Rhead, the artist, gave a talk on "Decoration in the Making of a Book," which he illustrated with chalk drawings. General A. C. Barnes, on the same evening, gave an interesting talk on Japanese life and customs.

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At the dinner given at the Aldine Association on January 9, 1901, the following telegram was received from the Canadian booksellers:

*(Copy of telegram received.)*

January 9, 6:04 P.M., 1901.

Montreal, Quebec, 9.

MR. CASS RICHARDSON,

Booksellers' League,

Rooms Aldine Assoc., 111 Fifth Ave., N. Y.

Canadian booksellers' greetings: aim high: twentieth century: labor overcometh all things: creditors have better memories than debtors: friendships multiply joys and divide griefs.

W. DRYSDALE.

The telegram was enthusiastically received.

After the dinner Mr. Henry Mayer gave a very interesting "Chalk Talk," describing the characters met on an ocean liner. His caricatures in chalk on the board were received with much laughter and his impersonations were heartily applauded.

### TRIBUTE TO J. N. WING

Since the November meeting the League had lost Mr. J. N. Wing, one of its most honored Members and its first president. Mr. Butler read the following tribute to Mr. J. N. Wing:

It is my sad duty to announce the loss of one of our most esteemed members, J. N. Wing, who died December 20, 1900, after a brief illness. To most of us his death came as a great shock, for very few knew of his illness. Nor did his family or physician imagine it would take so serious a turn. His death was

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sudden, and I only learned of it upon the day of his funeral.

Gentlemen, the Booksellers' League has lost one whom we were all glad to call a friend, and who, indeed, really was one, not superficially, but from the heart. If we have lost personally, our League has lost a great deal more. Probably no two members were more closely drawn together than he and I, for our labors for the League were so closely allied that it brought us in almost daily contact. For two years, during the early struggle of the League, when we had to give entertainments with no money to do it with, and had to rely upon volunteer effort, he was my constant aid and support. No matter how trying or urgent the situation, he was ever ready to throw himself into the breach and help out. I assure you this was not done for any self-glorification or personal pride, for little or no glory attached to it. No. He did it all, and more, too, for the benefit of the Booksellers' League. The League was in his very heart and soul, and he labored for its success, harder perhaps, gentlemen, than any of you ever gave him credit for.

He talked little of his efforts, but I can assure you of my own knowledge that he labored incessantly for the advancement and glory of your association, and the latter days of his life were made happy by the final success and prosperous condition of the League. We shall sadly miss him in our counsel, at our board meetings, at our dinners, and in all the places we were wont to meet. I would urge upon each and everyone of us to emulate the example he has so nobly set, and be as devoted, as strong-hearted and energetic on behalf of the League as he, and I hope, in fact I know, that the memory of our departed comrade, J. N. Wing, will live always in your memory as one who had the interests of the League at heart, and who did all one man could do to bring it to success.



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Mr. Butler called for a reading of the resolutions passed and adopted by the board, which met with approbation.

The resolutions adopted were as follows:

*Whereas*, It has pleased Almighty God to remove from among us our esteemed friend and first President, J. N. Wing, we, his associates and fellow-members of The Booksellers' League, desire to express our deep appreciation of the many and lasting obligations that we owe to him for his untiring efforts in furthering the best interests of The Booksellers' League and our calling; therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That in the death of J. N. Wing The Booksellers' League has lost one of its most active and useful members, whose utmost endeavors were exerted at all times for its welfare and prosperity.

*Resolved*, That the heartfelt sympathy of the members be extended to his widow in her affliction.

*Resolved*, That these resolutions be spread on the minutes and a copy transmitted to his widow.

Rev. Charles F. Cutter, Mr. Gilman, Mr. Kelly and others also testified to the loss suffered by the League and their personal esteem for Mr. Wing.

Josiah Norris Wing died on December 20, 1900, after a brief illness, at his home, No. 303 East Eighteenth Street, New York. Mr. Wing was born near Lynchburg, in Prince Edward County, Va., September 29, 1848. His father, E. N. Wing, a native of Maine, was engineer of the East Tennessee and Virginia Railroad, and built High Bridge, over the Appomattox River,

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at Farmville, Va. He was a Union man, and after the siege of Knoxville removed to New York City. Here young Wing attended the public schools and entered the College of the City of New York; but before the close of the first year he accepted a position as clerk in the Mercantile Library. He was connected with the library for thirteen years, and became first assistant librarian. Conscientious in the smallest as well as in the more important matters relating to his duties, Mr. Wing worked almost unceasingly. The result was that he suffered in health and was obliged to retire for a time from active work. In 1880 he took charge of the library business of Charles Scribner's Sons, for which his library training admirably fitted him. During the years he was engaged in the book business he kept in close touch with library progress. He was almost from the beginning a member of the New York Library Club and of the American Library Association. For seven years, and up to the time of his death, he had been treasurer of the New York State Library Association. In April, 1899, he was elected chief librarian of the New York Free Circulating Library. Mr. Wing, while faithful to his first love, the library, was no less loyal and devoted to the profession which he adopted, of which he was for so many years an honored member. He was one of the earlier and active members of the Booksellers' and Sta-

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tioners' Provident Association, which he served for many years as a trustee. He was also one of the organizers of the Booksellers' League, whose members twice elected him its president, and after that, until the time of his death, as its first vice-president. Active in his professional capacity, he was no less alive to his duties as a citizen, and as a member of the Good Government Club and of the Citizens' Union took a leading part in the reform movements inaugurated by these organizations. In 1883 he married Dr. Mercy N. Baker, and from that time their home was at 303 East Eighteenth Street, the house that "Fanny Fern" owned and occupied during her last years. Mr. Wing was an amiable and warm friend, and an enthusiastic guide and counsellor and, naturally, had a large circle of acquaintances and friends among booksellers, book collectors and librarians.

### *SIXTH ANNUAL DINNER*

The sixth annual dinner was given at the Aldine Association on February 6, upwards of 150 persons being present. After the cloth had been removed, the president, Mr. Butler, made a short address congratulating the League on its progress and prosperity. He then introduced the Rev. Dr. W. A. P. Martin, who for nearly fifty years has lived in China, being for years at the head of the Imperial University at Peking. Dr.

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Martin participated in the defense of the British legation in Peking, and his vivid, and at times pathetic, pictures of the siege aroused interest and sympathy. Mr. Samuel Bancroft, Jr., delivered an interesting address on the art and aims of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. The Hon. John R. Reid, who was to give a talk on book collectors and booksellers in New York for fifty years, was unfortunately absent on account of illness, but his place was acceptably filled by Mr. Francis W. Halsey, editor of the New York *Times* "Saturday Review." Mr. John Fox, Jr., concluded the literary part of the feast, and gave an altogether too short talk on Tennessee mountain life, replete with anecdotes, most of them told in the dialect peculiar to the natives. Messrs. Barclay Dunham, tenor, and Hugh E. Williams, baritone, accompanied by Frederic M. Davidson, contributed much to the entertainment of the company by songs and instrumental music. The *menu* was a contribution by Mr. Ernest Edwards, of the Photogravure and Color Company, who designed the cover, showing an old monk at his desk in his library. The design was gracefully and artistically carried out. The Trow Printing Company kindly furnished the letterpress.

### SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING

The sixth annual meeting, held on the evening of March 1, at the rooms of the Aldine Associa-

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tion, was taken up with the reading of the report of the Board of Managers and the revising of the Constitution and By-Laws. The report of the Board of Managers showed an undiminished membership, and a balance on hand of \$333.94. The revised Constitution was adopted practically as printed on pages 7-14.

The election for President resulted in the choice of Mr. S. Edgar Briggs, one of the most active members of the League. Mr. Briggs was supported during his term by Mr. F. D. Lacy as first vice-president, Mr. Cass Richardson as second vice-president, Mr. E. W. Johnson as secretary and Mr. James B. Brigham as treasurer.

## SEVENTH YEAR

APRIL, 1901—MARCH, 1902

THE April dinner of the Booksellers' League was held at the rooms of the Aldine Club on Wednesday, April 10, 1901. About forty members were present, who listened with pleasure and much applause to the reading of a paper on "Photo-Mechanical Printing Processes," by Mr. Ernest Edwards, of the Photogravure Color Co., illustrated by stereopticon views and printed examples.

### *VEGETARIAN DINNER*

On the evening of May 8, the Entertainment Committee, at the suggestion of Mr. Charles A. Montgomery, secretary of the Vegetarian Society, provided for the League a strictly vegetarian dinner. About fifty members were present to entertain their special guests, Ernest H. Crosby, president of the Vegetarian Society of New York, an enthusiastic vegetarian, and James Clarence Harvey.

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The *menu* was printed in green ink on a vegetable-colored sheet of blotting paper. It was as follows :

### MENU.

Cream of Asparagus  
Olives              Celery              Radishes  
Braised Celery, Cream Sauce  
Spinach Patties  
Lintel and Rice Croquettes, Tomato Sauce  
Pineapple Sherbet  
Cauliflower Hollandaise  
Creamed Bermuda Potatoes, Parsley Sauce  
Chicory Salad  
Frozen Sago with Strawberries  
Assorted Cakes  
Coffee

Mr. S. Edgar Briggs, the newly-elected president of the League, before introducing the speakers of the evening, thanked the members for the honor they had conferred upon him. In the course of his remarks he said :

This opening of the new century, it is confidently hoped, will prove to be the opening of a new era for our honored calling, not only in the large centres, but in the smaller. The new order of things inaugurated by the publishers this month should not be discounted by the bookseller, but should be accepted in the true spirit offered—NET—not the old misnomer "net," but as our English cousins would spell it, NETT—two T's tied taut. This League, as a body, is this evening to take official action of this long-looked-for event. As individuals we can materially help forward the movement by an optimistic consideration and application of

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the new scheme. Perhaps it is not as inclusive a scheme as we should have framed, but it surely is a long step in the right direction, and as such should be welcomed.

Mr. S. F. McLean offered the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted, and the secretary was instructed to mail a copy to both the American Publishers' Association and the American Booksellers' Association:

The Booksellers' League, in meeting assembled, at their first Vegetarian Dinner, their heads being clear and their stomachs not cloyed with meat which doth make gross, felicitates itself and congratulates the American Publishers' Association and the American Booksellers' Association on the auspicious inauguration of the "No-Cut" plan in the book business.

As an earnest of what yet remains to be done, in the spirit of fairness and equality in which it is offered, we heartily accept what has been accomplished, and pledge the moral and material support of the Booksellers' League to the happy end when all branches of the profession shall mutually share in material benefit.

Mr. Briggs then introduced Mr. Crosby, the son of the well-known theologian.

Mr. Crosby made a happy speech on "Why Bookmen Should be Vegetarians." He claimed that all domestic animals were more or less unhealthy, and must breed disease in those who consumed them.

Mr. James Clarence Harvey recited a poem he had written especially for the occasion on "The



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Garden of Eden;" also, an earlier poem of his on "The Cannibal Maid and the Missionary." One of the verses in the former poem ran as follows:

The Tree of Knowledge now has countless leaves,  
"Returned Unsold." They come in shocks and sheaves,  
With here and there, a glimpse of ripened fruit,  
Which, for an hour, the public seems to suit.  
A "David Harum" swaps a balky horse,  
And brags about the trade without remorse;  
The publisher who coughed and hemmed and hawed,  
Wakes up to send his family abroad.  
An "Eben Holden" makes its author stare,  
And sweeps the town with hayseed in his hair.  
A Mary Johnston learns "To Have and to Hold"  
Her royalties in unexpected gold.  
"Alice of Old Vincennes" arrives too late,  
To fan the torch of fame, this side the gate  
Which all must pass—and her creator dies  
Just as his fingers close upon his prize.  
"Monsieur Beaucaire," "The Palace of the King,"  
And Mr. Dooley with its Celtic ring,  
And not forgetting "Tales of the Ex-Tanks,"  
Must all extend to you their hearty thanks.  
They'd all be slumbering now, in calm repose,  
Did you not thrust them 'neath the public's nose.  
The Public does not know just what to read,  
They'll follow any literary lead.  
They'll take "Love Letters" ably edited,  
Or lacking those, they'll take "Unleavened Bread."

The evening passed off very pleasantly, and all parted as satisfied as if they had had "the fatted calf" prepared for them.

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At the dinner given on September 11, Mr. J. W. Nichols, the secretary of the American Booksellers' Association, read a paper on the aims of the association of which he was one of the prime movers.\* Mr. Nichols was followed by Mr. H. S. Hutchinson of New Bedford, Mass., who gave an enjoyable account of a trip to Porto Rico. Mr. T. E. Comba gave an amusing account of his experiences in Yucatan, and Mr. W. J. Kelly related some of his reminiscences of the book trade fifty years ago.

On October 16, the League entertained as guest of honor Professor H. Thurston Peck, senior editor of *The Bookman* and professor of Latin in Columbia University, who spoke on the subject of "Booksellers and Authors."

The dinner given on November 13 was attended by nearly one hundred persons. Josiah Flynt Willard, the author of "The World of Graft," etc., was among the guests, and told some amusing stories of his life as a tramp. Dr. James M. Ludlow, the author of "The Captain of the Janizaries," etc., treated the League to a remarkably good talk on some of the perils of authorship, full of sound sense and embellished with a number of good stories, and Mr. Thomas J. Vivian, the author of "Luther Strong," gave a picture

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\* The paper was printed in full in *The Publishers' Weekly* for September 14, 1901, pp. 429-432.

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of life and customs in New York City sixty years ago by quoting contemporary accounts in the several newspapers published in the latter part of October, 1844.

On this occasion was read a statement of the gratifying work done by the League, which was subsequently circulated in leaflet form.

The first dinner in 1902 was given at the Aldine Association on January 8. Notwithstanding the unfavorable weather upwards of fifty members and their friends were present. The guest of the evening was Mr. Joseph Gantz, the president of the Publishers' Printing Company of New York, who read an interesting paper on "The Development of Printing," extracts of which were printed in *The Publishers' Weekly*, February 15, 1902, V. 61, No. 1568, pages 515-517.

Mr. Gantz was followed by Mr. Fleming H. Revell, who spoke of the conditions of the trade in the West and complimented the League upon its creditable work.

### SEVENTH ANNUAL DINNER

The seventh annual dinner was held at the Aldine Association on the evening of February 5, and was attended by upwards of 150 persons. When the *café noir* was already but a dream of the past, and the smoking weed was beginning

## THE BOOKSELLERS' LEAGUE

to lend fragrance to the occasion, the president of the League, Mr. S. Edgar Briggs, started the ball a-rolling with a short address to the League. He said, in part :

Our profession is one that attracts men of brains as well as men of wealth, and the League was formed to promote social intercourse and cordial acquaintance between such men. The League has flourished, and in the past year has welcomed from three to six new members at each meeting. Yet our House Committee has been forced to pay out for our monthly entertainment more than has been coming in. What we need most at present is an increase of membership—an infusion of new blood.

### TURKISH BOOKSELLERS

Mr. Briggs then introduced Henry Otis Dwight, D.D., who spoke as follows on "The Ups and Downs of Turkish Booksellers":

Here in New York, with your splendid resources, you can hardly realize the condition of the book-trade in Turkey. There bookseller, printer and publisher are practically one and the same person. The best of them have but a niggardly outfit, with hand presses and hand labor throughout; while the printer of the lower classes writes his book in script, prints it from lithographic stone, and sells it on the street from a basket at an average of six cents per copy. When he has sold out he lives on the proceeds until they give out, when he goes to press again.

The first font of Turkish type was cast by an Italian, 150 years ago, and scanty progress has been made in

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printing since then. This is due (1) to an "isolation of ideas"; (2) to the diversity of languages in the land; and (3) to the nature of the literature itself. As to the "isolation of ideas," printing has always been looked at askance in Turkey, and all books coming to-day from the government press have to bear a certificate saying there is nothing contrary to the law of God in the art of printing, hence it is lawful for people to read! The diversity of languages, which persists chiefly because of the jealousy and obstinacy of the different races, is responsible for blocking the progress of literature and publishing, in Turkey. A book, to be circulated at all widely, must be printed in a dozen different tongues, for no average Turk can read any dialect but his own. The cases of the American Mission Press contain fonts for English, French, Turkish, Armenian, Greek, Bulgarian, Hebrew, Armenian-Turkish and Graeco-Turkish.

The trouble with Turkish literature itself is that it is written in an ancient, high-flown style, permeated with Persian thought and speech, which the majority of the people cannot understand. This style is used even by many modern writers. Indeed, the atmosphere is permeated with the idea that the common people may not be trusted with books.

Education, however, is opening the way for a revival of Turkish literature and a school of young writers is growing who know that to reach the people they must write in simple terms of every-day speech. What they do not understand is how to write that which shall be of permanent value. They are reproducing many of the poorer French novels and similar trash. There are, to be sure, good books, but these are chiefly the older books, in script, which sell at prices ranging from \$20 for a pocket Koran to \$300 for a quarto of some great master. It is, of course, a sin against God to sell a copy of the Koran, yet the tactful purchaser knows that he

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may have a copy as a 'gift' if he will make the bookseller a gift in return—of \$20 or so.

The American Mission Press is setting a high standard for the future of Turkish bookmaking, and at the same time it is reaching the people. Outside its special line it publishes works of general worth. It meets with many difficulties, chiefly in the censorship. Although the censors rule out only political matter, they often find political paragraphs where the author never dreamed they existed.

There is a small but steadily growing demand for American books in Turkey, and as one good book has the influence there that one hundred would have here, the American booktrade has a good opportunity to exercise an increasing influence for good upon the Turkish revival of literature.

At the close of the speech, Mr. J. Lloyd enlivened the occasion with a couple of comic songs.

Then the president introduced Mr. Henry Mayer, the well-known artist, who gave a bright little talk to the effect that, after all, the artist is but the tool of his surroundings. "Modern art," said he, "can be administered like any other drug—and while you wait. There are tricks in the artist's trade which are easily learned. You need but a name, a reputation, a garret, and for models an apple or pear." In support of this last interesting hypothesis Mr. Mayer made a number of clever crayon sketches, showing what unsuspected masterpieces may be evolved from the outline of a pear.

At the conclusion of Mr. Mayer's remarks the

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president read a letter of regret from Mr. Wm. B. Howland, who was to have spoken on "The Progress of the Modern Weekly."

Mr. John Kendrick Bangs, who had just come in, was next asked to fulfil his share in the programme, the toast given him being "Over the Plum Pudding." Mr. Bangs confessed, with some embarrassment, that this toast was a clever "ad." which his press agent had worked into the programme; nevertheless he was unable to speak on the subject, not having read the book. He preferred to speak upon "Booksellers I Have Met" or "Wild Publishers I Have Hunted," and finally chose the first of these topics. He mentioned his first meeting with Volney Streamer at Brentano's. Stopping one summer day for some light reading *en route* to his vacation haunts, he was offered by Mr. Streamer, unaware of his identity, one of his own books. "Oh, I don't want that," said J. K. B. "I can't read Bangs." "Well, do you know," confided the other, "neither can I." When Mr. Bangs gave the name and address to which the books were to be sent, Mr. Streamer uttered one of those exclamations usually printed in dashes, and nearly fainted.

Mr. Bangs concluded his talk with a few serious words of appreciation of the friendly relations between writers and booksellers, and of the earnest work in behalf of good literature being done on both sides.

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### *SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING*

The seventh annual meeting, held on March 12, was, in a certain sense, also a love feast, the recipient of tokens of affection and appreciation being Mr. James S. Baker, the senior member of the Baker & Taylor Company.

The report of Board of Managers showed a membership of 298, and a balance of \$327.49 in the treasury. The election of officers resulted in the choice of Mr. John A. Holden, who through his term was supported by Mr. Frederick D. Lacy as first vice-president; Mr. Cass Richardson as second vice-president; Mr. Francis Gilman as secretary, and Mr. James B. Brigham as treasurer.

The business meeting was then temporarily suspended in order to hear the speakers of the evening, who were introduced by Mr. S. Edgar Briggs.

### MEMORIAL TO JAMES SHAW BAKER

Mr. George Haven Putnam was first called upon, and spoke substantially as follows:

It is a privilege to be associated with you here this evening; and yet it gives me a curious feeling to be here as a representative of the veterans of the trade. For I must admit that the guest of the evening and myself are book traders of the last century, and must talk about last century things. I doubt if you realize all the bother and trouble we had in the nineteenth



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century; in those days it was not always smooth sailing, with big profits; some books were failures, sometimes authors grumbled; but to-day all these troubles are passed away!

I have a great confidence in the standards of the American booktrade. Yet we can look to Europe for models which, while not to be followed always, are deserving of consideration. In Germany, especially, training is considered essential for the bookseller, and he considers himself nearly a professional man, and in social standing is certainly above retail dealers in other goods. Training is worth while not only for personal satisfaction, but it pays as a matter of capital for the individual and progress for the trade. German merchants crossing over to London crowd out the Englishmen on their own soil—and similarly in the English colonies—because they have taken more pains with their work. They have a higher standard of achievement, they get the places, and they hold them. Englishmen will not be able to hold even their home trade unless they set a professional standard for the trade such as has been set by the continental booksellers, particularly the Germans.

I am not sermonizing to you experienced men, but I am laying down the idea of a standard for you to impress on your younger associates. Let us believe that the imperial progress of America will be a means of establishing this high standard. Let the book trade be represented in our outermost possessions with the best trained men, who will stand comparison with the trained men from the Continent. Such an organization as this is a step in that direction, because here you take a professional view of your trade.

Not only must we have the right sort of author and publisher, but also the intelligent bookseller to put the books before the people. Like every trade, the book

## THE BOOKSELLERS' LEAGUE

trade needs the facility of distribution, and in that line our guest here has been a veritable Vanderbilt. The bookseller must manage the channels of trade with the integrity of character, purpose, and action which secure confidence, and we cannot honor that combination too much. I am glad to add my word of hopefulness for the future years of the trade in the twentieth century.

Mr. Briggs then read the following letter of regret from Dr. Theo. L. Cuyler, who had been invited to be present:

BROOKLYN, N. Y., March 6, 1902.

*My dear Mr. Briggs:*

I regret exceedingly that my engagements will prevent me from accepting your kind invitation for March 12th.

It would give me great delight to join in "especially honoring" my beloved friend Mr. James Shaw Baker. He was, when in Brooklyn, a faithful member of my church; I once did him the great service of uniting him to his excellent wife; and he, in turn, has rendered me most valuable service as my liberal and honorable publisher. He can claim the credit that during his whole business career his name has never been affixed to any volumes that were not of the most pure and wholesome character.

Please to convey to him my hearty salutations and congratulations, and a most sincere "God bless you!" from

His loving old-time pastor,

THEODORE L. CUYLER.

Mr. Simon Brentano next spoke appreciatively of the great value to the retail trade of the Baker & Taylor Company. He went on to

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say that the organization of booksellers would benefit the publishers, for the interests of both are interwoven.

The American Publishers' Association, Mr. Brentano continued, has brought about a reasonable betterment in a reasonable time; and we look to it for further improvements which will permit the retail bookseller to reward in actual money, by the actual selling of books, our helpers—the men represented by this organization. At present the retail bookseller's December sales are supposed to pay the expenses of the other eleven months. Every January cold chills run down my back when my office door opens and my employees ask to interview me. I regret the business does not allow the payment of better salaries, but there is no other help than by getting better prices.

Mr. Nelson Taylor, of the Baker & Taylor Company, speaking from the standpoint of the jobber, said he had always held that the jobber was between the upper and the nether millstones—the publisher representing the upper and the retail bookseller the nether millstone.

The publishers always want to sell higher than Mr. Baker wants to pay; the booksellers want to pay lower than he asks. Both of them have much sympathy for him, and the publishers hope he will succeed, though they are at a loss to know how he will do it! But I think I have more real sympathy for Br. Baker than any one else, for between him and me there is never any difference as to prices!

I am greatly delighted to find this universal respect and affection for Mr. Baker. If the Lord loves a

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cheerful giver, He must love also a cheerful worker, and that Mr. Baker has been; true, also, throughout, not only to expressed agreements, but to those implied agreements which grow out of business. It has been a great satisfaction to me to be associated with such a man.

Mr. John H. Dingman, of Charles Scribner's Sons, said he had been looking up old records, and had been impressed by the fact that about 1825 and soon after there sprang up in this country a large number of men who became thoroughly identified with publishing and book-selling who made their mark, and left names that live to-day as truly as the names of our authors who appeared about that time.

The men who to-day have your respect because of these perpetuated names are not men who strove ambitiously to be famous; they were laborious workers—men who led lives of industry and therefore deserve the honor they have to-day.

I believe we should make known to a living man our appreciation of his purposes in life, before he is dead. Tell him to his face we honor and love him, and say, "You are such a man as I should like to be."

Mr. A. Growoll was the next speaker, and paid Mr. Baker the following tribute:

The thing that cheers me most on this occasion is that for once in a generation our profession does honor to one in its ranks during his lifetime—takes him by the hand, and cheers him with the thought that after all his labors have not been in vain or unrecog-

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nized, however scanty and uncertain the pecuniary reward may be. Judged by the measure and quality of such work as our friend and guest has performed for forty years, he should to-day be able to rest under his own vine and fig tree, removed from care and toil. As it is the torch-bearer who lights the way for the scholar and searcher after information through the labyrinth of long-since forgotten literature and musty lore, partly through choice, but oftener through circumstance, rarely attains to that enviable condition.

However, there is satisfaction in doing work conscientiously and well, and this satisfaction Mr. Baker may take in full measure. It is through such men as he that our profession holds the high place in the estimation of the educated world to-day, and in honoring him we doubly honor ourselves.

The following resolution was then read by Mr. Dingman and adopted by the League:

The members of the Booksellers' League, assembled at their seventh annual meeting, esteem it a pleasure to welcome as their guest of honor Mr. James Shaw Baker, of the Baker & Taylor Co., of New York City.

In looking back upon his long career as bookseller and publisher, we bear witness that his courteous and gentlemanly bearing, his wise and discriminating counsel, his unswerving integrity, and his unceasing efforts to elevate the ideals of his profession, are but the indications of his manly character in all the phases of his life. As men who meet him day by day, and who are conscious of the wide influence he exerts upon others, we are glad to make so public an expression of our respect and regard for him, and it is resolved that the Secretary be directed to enter this declaration upon the minutes of this meeting, as part of the proceedings

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thereof, and to forward to Mr. Baker a copy of the same.

Mr. Baker, who was then called upon to speak, evidently had been deeply moved by the many sentiments of regard for him expressed during the evening, and modestly referred to them only in the few words he felt necessary to explain his gratitude. He then told something of the earlier days of the jobbing business.

I have been in the trade longer than most of you, Mr. Baker said, but the years have been pleasantly spent. There have been great changes in that time. There were once ten or twelve general jobbing houses in this city, and a corresponding number in Philadelphia and Boston. So far as I know, there are none left now. The house into which I came has continued without a break to the present day, but east of Chicago there is no house like ours engaging in both schoolbook and general book jobbing.

There were two seasons in the early days—one from the middle of March till late in April, and the other from August till late fall. Christmas and New Year's were not holidays, the bookseller being obliged to work on both of those days. The buyers from the South and what is now the Central West came to New York, and mail orders were few. The Trade Sale feature is also now gone. These sales were attended by hundreds of buyers from all over the country, and large quantities of goods were sold, amounting to thousands of dollars; but gradually the attendance dwindled to a dozen or fifteen, and publishers found it no longer profitable to contribute books.

In the business of making money a house will suc-

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ceed if it gets a fair living profit rather than by cutting prices continually. The jobber must get his prices and profit, and it is far better for him to buy at 90 cents and sell at \$1.08 than to buy at \$1.08 and sell at 90 cents.

## EIGHTH YEAR

APRIL, 1902—MARCH, 1903

THE first dinner of the eighth year of the League was given on April 9, 1902, Mr. John A. Holden in the chair. The first speaker of the evening was Mr. Everett T. Tomlinson, author of "A Jersey Boy in the Revolution," "Three Young Continentals," and a number of other well-known books for young people, who took for his subject "Reading for the Young." Mr. Tomlinson contended that, inasmuch as almost the first spoken demand a child makes of its parents is for a story, it is reasonable to suppose that it is as natural in children to be supplied with stories as it is for them to be satisfied with milk before their teeth are grown. It then becomes the duty of the author to provide proper reading matter adapted for the intellects of healthy growing children. The idea of allowing children to browse among the masters is a delusion common to the people who regard the Child in the abstract, and is not generally ap-



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plicable. Mr. James Barnes, assistant editor of *Harper's Weekly*, and also well known as the writer of a number of popular books for young people, entertained the company with a number of good stories admirably told. Dr. I. K. Funk, of the Funk & Wagnalls Company, concluded the evening's entertainment by speaking briefly on the subject "Higher Order of Books." He said if the subject had been "Higher Orders for Books" it would have pleased him better. He thought that no one could help more towards attaining both a "higher order of books" and "higher orders for books" than the bookseller—the former by preferring to sell the best in literature to the neglect of the trash, and the latter by making himself thorough master of the good points of every book he attempts to sell. He said he would rather have a tolerable book in the hands of a bookseller who understood his business than an excellent book in the hands of a tolerably good bookseller. The better bookseller would be able to make more money out of a poor book than a poor bookseller could make out of the best book ever turned out by a publisher.

The May dinner was held on the 14th of the month. Mr. Ernest Thompson-Seton, author of "Wild Animals I Have Known," etc., spoke on the reasoning powers of animals, mentioning

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some instances he had observed of remarkable intelligence in antelopes, eagles and wolves, and concluded by saying:

The animals have personalities like our own, but of course with much lower reasoning powers. The study of the animals from this point of view gives a great elevating pleasure to those who indulge in it, and is supplanting the pleasure of shooting merely for the sake of killing. All the best sentiment of the nation is in the direction of preserving our animals. Now, the interest in these things will not fall off altogether. Each year we are becoming more and more an outdoor nation, and take greater pleasure in the study of outdoor life. The demand will endure and so will the supply. The nature book has come to stay. There is a "boom," in a certain sense, but the normal condition, when it is established, will show a greater interest in nature books than before.

Mr. J. Hamblen Sears spoke next, in a dry, humorous vein, upon "Angling for Authors." He said times had changed since the poor, miserable, half-starved author went trembling into the presence of the publisher with a manuscript. "To-day," said he, "when we have the picture of a publisher going to the author's elegant hotel suite, or to his country estate, begging him to write a new book, and finding him buried under a pile of letters from fifteen or twenty other publishers, all offering him ten times more than he can pay, the situation becomes serious!" He described, in an amusing way, his business visits

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to numerous "literary centres" in the Middle West, where his arrival was often made the occasion of a convivial celebration rather than of business transactions; of his visit to a youthful authoress, who revealed to him her plans for four of the most remarkable books ever conceived by the human brain, etc. Mr. Sears also told of his visit to General Lew Wallace, whom he found in his huge marble "study" at work upon his *Memoirs*, and to Gilbert Parker, from whom he heard the story of the prototype in real life of Charles Steele, the hero of "The Right of Way."

Mr. Louis Burgess, of Brentano's, was the last speaker, and gave several excellent recitations of sketches in negro dialect, concluding with a selection from Thomas Nelson Page's "Meh Lady."

On the evening of October 10, the League entertained Mr. Francis P. Nichols, author of "Hidden Shensi," who gave a thrilling account of his experiences in his search for that hidden land. Mr. Nichols talked for nearly two hours and held his audience spellbound. His lecture was illustrated with pictures of Chinese temples, etc. Mr. Robert P. Woodward concluded the evening's entertainment by describing his travels on a donkey's hurricane back, on a wager, from New York to San Francisco.

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The November dinner of The Booksellers' League, owing to a misunderstanding of the exact date on the part of the steward of the Aldine Association, could not be held as usual at the rooms of that association on the evening of November 12, and the Entertainment Committee therefore made arrangements for accommodations for the evening with the host of the Hotel de Logerot, at the corner of Eighteenth Street and Fifth Avenue. Upwards of sixty members of the League and their friends were present to do justice to the treat provided by both the hotel and the Entertainment Committee. The Rev. Thomas Dixon, Jr., the well-known clergyman, and author of "The Leopard's Spots," etc., was the first speaker, and chose for his subject the development of the Anglo-Saxon race and its destiny as a conqueror of the world, a subject that, judging by the frequent and enthusiastic applause, found a responsive audience.

The next speaker, the Rev. Dr. Thomas Slicer, dissected the foibles and follies of the bookbuyer and collector and the weaknesses of the bookseller in so good-natured and inimitably humorous a manner as fairly to bring the house down with laughter and salvos of applause. In speaking of the concern certain booksellers have for the ethics of the collector in purchasing bargains, Dr. Slicer gave an instance of where he bought a book in a junkshop on Third Avenue worth sixty dollars for one dollar, instead of paying

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a dollar for a book not worth sixty cents. The bookseller to whom he confided this good news remonstrated with the doctor for taking advantage of the ignorance of the man. "Not at all," replied the doctor, "the man was making four hundred per cent. on his investment, and I did not feel called upon to tempt him from percentage to larceny." We doubt whether Dr. Slicer could do better in mapping out his next book than to enlarge upon his remarks on this occasion. It would be as good if not better than anything ever attempted on these lines.

Dr. James H. Canfield, the librarian of Columbia University, fittingly closed the speaking of the evening by dwelling on the mission, the pleasures and the duties and responsibilities of the bookseller. This he did with a touch alive with human sympathy and interest that won for him a measure of well-merited applause. The speaking was interspersed by the performances of Mr. J. Wallace Mackey, an amateur ventriloquist, well known to the members present. His contribution to the entertainment helped materially to the enjoyment of one of the most enjoyable and inspiring meetings ever held by the League, and one which fittingly closed a season's series of successful entertainments.

The dinner held January 14, 1903, was unusually well attended. The League was favored with a pleasant evening and by the attendance

## THE BOOKSELLERS' LEAGUE

of every one of the guests who had promised to speak—namely, Messrs. Henry Harland, Charles George D. Roberts, Dr. W. H. Drummond and Homer Davenport. Mr. Harland's talk was pleasantly reminiscent of life in the literary and artistic haunts of Paris and London; Mr. Roberts talked entertainingly of many interesting things; Mr. Drummond fairly took the members of the League off their feet by his charming and inimitable recitations of French dialect stories and verse; and Mr. Davenport, well known for his "Trust" cartoons, talked of his early experiences in Oregon and drew sketches of some famous politicians. The speaking was brought to a close by Colonel Marshall, a companion of President Castro, of Venezuela, who gave some glimpses of the conditions in that much-revolutionized country.

### *EIGHTH ANNUAL DINNER*

The eighth annual dinner was given at the Aldine Association on the evening of February 11. Notwithstanding the heavy rain during the early part of the evening about 125 members and their guests assembled about the board when the dinner bell was rung. There were representatives of the trade from neighboring cities, the West being represented by Mr. Bray, of A. C. McClurg & Co., of Chicago. The excellent dinner of seven courses was eaten leisurely, and the

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hour hand of the clock pointed close to nine o'clock when the president, John A. Holden, arose to introduce the speaking of the evening, and the members of the League settled themselves in comfortable positions to enjoy the second part of the programme.

Mr. Holden spoke briefly, as follows:

The Booksellers' League celebrates to-night the rounding out of its eighth year of existence. Eight years is an old age for an organization so essentially bohemian as ours. An ordinary club makes money, while we appear to lose it, and yet thrive. An ordinary club seeks to settle in a permanent home, but we cheerfully wander about and stay only as long as we are pleased. An ordinary club saves from its income for a building fund; our dues when paid are joyously spent. An ordinary club is generally in debt; we never have been in debt, and probably never shall be—because the dinner bell will not ring out if the treasury is empty.

There are few associations like ours. After eight years of knocking about in halls, restaurants, hotels and club rooms, always progressing to a simple ideal, the Booksellers' League to-day has a larger and more steadfast membership than ever. The League stands for good fellowship, is content with a quiet place in which to eat a good dinner and to enjoy the rare intellectual treats so bountifully provided on every occasion. This happy combination has been enjoyed without high taxes, or much red tape, and that is why we are all loyal to the League and enthusiastic in its maintenance. The League has been the means of forming and fostering many friendships among its members; and it is for this, if for no other reason, that it ought to have a warm place in the heart of the booktrade, since it has afforded an

## THE BOOKSELLERS' LEAGUE

opportunity for its members to become better acquainted one with the other.

The Booksellers' League, I claim, is a sane club, run on simple lines, and serves a good purpose. Let us continue steadfast to the League now, next year and for many years to come.

The president next introduced the Plectra Mandolin Club, who favored the League with a fine musical program.

Professor John Dyneley Prince, of Columbia University, who has made extensive researches among the Northeastern American Indians, was the first speaker, and gave a most interesting talk on the Indians whose customs he had studied. He recited very effectively several passages from "Kulóskap, the Master," which he brought out, in collaboration with Charles Godfrey Leland, closing his talk with an imitation of a "Song to the Wind" as rendered by a tribe of South American Indians. Professor Prince was heartily applauded and every one regretted that his talk could not have lasted longer.

Will Carleton, the author of "Farm Ballads," spoke to the subject of "Books Chained and Unchained," in which he dwelt rather on the bonds of pride, ignorance, jealousy, poor workmanship, etc., that prevents the diffusion of knowledge, rather than on the physical bonds that kept knowledge from the masses centuries ago. Mr. Carleton gave many of his early ex-



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periences as teacher and journalist, all of which kept his hearers in good humor for some time.

William J. Long was to have spoken about "Animals and Men," but was prevented by illness from being present.

Dr. Minot J. Savage struck a serious note in his talk on "Sins of Booksellers," in which, however, he also touched impressively on some of the shortcomings of authors, as well as of those of the booktrade. Dr. Savage's remarks were lighted up by flashes of good-natured satire and humorous references to his own weaknesses as a book collector.

After the Plectra Mandolin Club had rendered some more music, Mr. Carleton, to round out the evening, kindly deferred to a very general request that he recite from some of his works, which he did to the entire satisfaction of the company.

At about half-past eleven, the rain having ceased and the moon lighting up the skies, the members broke up and made their way towards home.

### *EIGHTH ANNUAL MEETING*

The eighth annual meeting was held on the evening of March 11. The report of the Board of Managers showed a membership of 138, and \$220.48 in the treasury, and the manager of the Employment Bureau reported that he had only fifty-three calls for help, showing a falling

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off of about 40 per cent. from the previous year. On this occasion Mr. Bonnell was elected an honorary member of the League in recognition of his admirable services.

The election for President resulted in the choice of Mr. Cass Richardson, of E. P. Dutton & Co., who was supported during his term by Mr. Frederick D. Lacy as first vice-president; Mr. John Briggs as second vice-president; Mr. Francis Gilman as secretary, and Mr. James B. Brigham as treasurer.

After the business meeting Mr. Harry De Windt described his journey by land from Paris to New York to ascertain the feasibility of a railroad over that route, and by means of a stereopticon showed many actual scenes from this thrilling trip. Mr. De Windt left Paris on December 19, 1901, his companions being George Harding and the Vicomte de Clinchamp, and travelled by rail *via* Berlin and Moscow to Irkutsk, thence 2000 miles by horse sledge to Yakutsk, thence 2000 miles by reindeer sledge to Sredni-Kolymsk, thence 2000 miles to Behring Strait, thence *via* Cape Nome and San Francisco to New York, which he reached on August 25, 1902, having covered 18,484 miles in a little over eight months.

Mr. De Windt exhibited several views showing the wonderful development in six years of Cape Nome, where he attended an evening dress

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ball, and of the wonderful White Pass Railroad. He thought a railroad from Paris to New York a probability of the future. The expense, however, would be enormous, and for many years to come it would not pay. A bridge across Behring Strait he considers an engineering impossibility.

Joaquin Miller expressed his great admiration of Mr. De Windt's narrative; he liked the "room" of it. He thought the New Yorker needed more *room* in his life. "We are apt to think New York is all the world," he said. "But out West is the place! where we have the Pacific—the American Ocean, the most unpacific of oceans, but oh, the room and the majesty of it all!"

He went on to say that we should learn to love the beautiful—as do the Japanese, for instance. He showed a Japanese book printed on silk paper and weighing an ounce or two, and compared it with an ordinary twelvemo, which would weigh perhaps two pounds. "I believe I have published a book," he said, "but I will never publish one in a coffin like that!"—pointing to an American-made book. "I never published a book with pictures in it; if I cannot make a picture of the book itself I will not write it. Put it in black and white and trust your reader to have some intelligence." In short, Mr. Miller commended to the League the Japanese book in his hand as a model of what a book should be.

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"The man who first gets the fine silken paper—."  
Here he declared that he, too, was now obliged,  
like the New Yorker, to run and catch trains, and  
he cut short his remarks.

## NINTH YEAR

APRIL, 1903—MARCH, 1904

WITH the dinner held on April 15, the League inaugurated a new form of entertainment, namely, the "Roll Call," in which each one present was invited to take part. The question for discussion was, "Which is the better salesman: one who supplies intelligently the demands of his customer, or one who creates a demand in his customer and then supplies it."

### QUALITY OF SALESMANSHIP

The names of those present were then called, and each answering in turn, some very interesting, helpful, suggestive and humorous thoughts were offered on the topic for debate. Mr. Holden, of Thomas Whittaker's, thought the question silly. He said there was need for both, and pointed out the danger of disgusting customers by offering too many suggestions, but on the whole inclined a little to the salesman that created the demand.

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Mr. Charles E. Butler, of Brentano's, said he was a buyer, not a salesman, and that his opinions of salesmen could not be given in public. He was the salesman's football—damned by the wholesale salesman if he did not buy and damned by their retail salesman when he did. He gave several humorous and personal examples, received with great appreciation by the League. He also thought that the salesman who can create a demand can also supply it intelligently and is a private benefactor to his employer.

Mr. W. H. Parker, of E. P. Dutton & Co., compared the salesman who simply supplied the demands of his customer to the slot machine which does its work intelligently, so much so that at times it got the money and gave nothing in return. He thought the salesman who got into conversation with his customer, found out his line of reading and suggested books and made sales satisfied his customer and earned his personal friendship.

Mr. Henry Malkan held that many customers did not know what they wanted until they had been talked into wanting something suggested.

Mr. W. J. Kelly said: "It takes a man with extraordinary ability to create a demand. He must be a student and have commercial ability as well. He does not sell what the papers of the day are telling of, but from the top shelves. There are a few bookstores left to-day, and they

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are found where the clerk who creates the demand abides."

Mr. McBride asserted, "The only man I would want working for me is the one who creates the demand."

Mr. Macdonald, the binder, facetiously claimed neither was necessary if the books were well bound.

Mr. Bowman said: "It is no easy job to be a good salesman, but I think there is a happy medium between the animated machine and the smart salesman who sticks his customers."

Nearly all present spoke and some spoke much to the point, but naturally there was duplication of ideas. When the vote was called, after half an hour, it stood 7 for the salesman who supplies demand already there and 40 for the salesman who creates demand. Mr. Charles Battell Loomis then gave readings from several of his popular books, and Mr. T. J. Vivian gave several of his humorous experiences as a reporter. The evening was most enjoyable.

### *LADIES' NIGHT*

Merely to say that the Ladies' Night given at the Booksellers' League on the evening of May 13, 1903, was a success would not be doing the subject full justice. Well aware of the many enjoyable and successful dinners given by the League during the past ten years, we think we

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are well within the truth if we say that this was the most successful of all the entertainments ever given under the auspices of the League. If any one was doubtful of the success of the affair before the evening on which it took place, those doubts were dispelled an hour before the company of upwards of one hundred and fifty men and women took their places in the brilliantly illuminated dining room—every face bright with expectancy and good humor.

After the excellent dinner of nine courses had been discussed, the president, Mr. Cass Richardson, in an admirable short address welcomed the guests. He justified the action of the League in providing this entertainment for the ladies, because without the patronage of the ladies the bookseller might be obliged to go without a dinner himself. He then gave a humorous illustration of what he meant, by describing a day's experience in a bookstore at which three men bought three books, the total sum of which amounted to ninety cents, on which the profit was thirty cents, while all day long a stream of women passed in and out of the store making generous purchases in its every department.

Mr. Richardson then introduced as the first speaker Mr. Simeon Ford, who in his characteristic manner described how he was inveigled into the paths of authorship and how his book, "A Few Remarks," which was shortly to be



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brought out by Doubleday, Page & Co., came to be written. "This book," he said, "will be so arranged that it may be used as a paper weight, stove lifter, waffle iron, egg beater, sleep inducer and cat destroyer. In addition to all this, it will contain the cream of my after dinner speeches—slightly curdled and cheesy, but warranted to cure the blues, remove warts and bunions, brighten the intellect and touch up the liver. Every customer who makes affidavit that he has read the book will receive an endurance medal and a coupon, which, when presented at my bar, accompanied by five cents, will entitle him to a glass of beer."

Mrs. V. M. Coryell next entertained the company by several violin selections, given with rare artistic execution. William Eleroy Curtis, the author of "The True Thomas Jefferson," "The Turk and His Lost Provinces," etc., who has spent many years in the Orient, gave an interesting account of conditions in Turkey and of the outlook in Macedonia. Mrs. Coryell, with charming readiness again responded to a request for more music, after which Benjamin Chapin entertained the company with his impersonation of Abraham Lincoln, in which part he had made up so true a personation of the original as for a moment to be startling in its reality. Mr. Chapin for about three-quarters of an hour gave a reading (if such his acting the part he assumes may

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be called,) from Lincoln's history, beginning with his speech to his neighbors on leaving Springfield after his first election to the Presidency, then giving a glimpse of his home life in Washington, and, finally, a display of his skill of controlling and directing his powerful contemporaries. Mr. Chapin in height, make-up and voice is said to imitate his subject as faithfully as possible. He certainly had the power to stir his hearers to deep sympathy with "Old Abe."

Among the guests from out of town we noticed Mr. and Mrs. Fleming H. Revell, of Chicago, and Mr. H. S. Hutchinson, of New Bedford, Mass. As a souvenir each lady received an attractive little volume of poems or essays, presented by different publishing houses, in each one of which was placed a silk ribbon book mark inscribed in gold letters "Booksellers' League, Ladies' Night, May 13, 1903." In passing around the after-dinner cigars the ladies also were not overlooked, a special brand of cigar having been secured for this purpose.

### *AMERICAN BOOKSELLERS' ASSOCIATION DINNER*

On June 8 the Booksellers' League, at the request of the officers of the American Booksellers' Association, made the arrangements for the third annual dinner of the A. B. A., which was held at the Aldine Association. There were

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present upwards of two hundred persons. The address of welcome on behalf of the trade of New York City was made by Mr. Simon Brentano. Referring to the subjects to be discussed by the American Booksellers' Association on the following day Mr. Brentano said:

To the discussion of means through which the condition of retail bookselling may be bettered I offer for such thought as may be of slight service to you in your proceedings one of the main principles that must be fought out and won before we can reconstruct and maintain in a healthy condition throughout the United States retail bookselling.

It is the question of retail price.

The selling at, and maintaining of, a fair retail price will in its finality mean either the life or death of retail bookselling as carried on in its best days and as is the hope alike of the public, the publisher and the retailer to see perpetuated.

The public is prepared to pay and will pay a fair price for a book. It is not of chief or highest consequence whether a customer pays five or ten cents more for each book, provided that the price is uniform.

This five or ten cents in question means in many businesses the difference between a profit or loss side arising from retail bookselling.

It is clear that if in the business of publishing it is intended as a permanent part and principle on the part of publishers to fix for each book a retail price and announce such retail price to the public, it is the manifest duty of the publisher to aid with every means in his power in honestly seeing to it that such prices as have been established by him shall be maintained.

Some method must be found which will allow a book

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to be sold at the price advertised and no other, and such a system must be inaugurated whether all books are called net books or have any other denomination. If such a policy to publishers seems inexpedient, or if publishers are unwilling or unable to attain to that point where publishers' prices will be paid by retail buyers, is it not then better to discard all published retail prices and to sell to booksellers and leave the bookseller to fix for each book such a retail price as in his judgment may seem best.

One cannot reasonably expect the publishers to be of greater service in this direction until the retail bookselling trade for and by itself will throughout the year carry in stock a larger variety of books and one more adequate to serve their respective trades. . . .

The increase in public libraries and other forms of supplying books to readers through other means than direct purchase, have seemed to limit sales; yet this need not dishearten booksellers. There is ample room for good book stores everywhere. A careful selection of stock and capable salespeople and intelligent service generally will find response in most communities.

It should be remembered that thousands of retail customers—men and women of great intellect and of cultivated taste in reading—find many book stores unequipped to give them proper service. Purchasers increase according to character and excellence of help.

Every retailer should serve his customer first. Everything else comes last, and especially last should come, if at all, any personal feeling between a retailer and publisher which causes a retailer to hesitate to put in stock as promptly and serve his customers—as he would otherwise—with any book of merit and importance, simply because of relations between a retailer and publisher, which are of no concern and of no interest to the customer.

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Another thing which must be definitely taken into account before we can hope for the advancement and endurance of retail bookselling is to found a school for retail bookselling, carrying out the idea of Mr. Growoll. Without such a school it does not seem possible to nurse back into the great life and strength, which should surround it, the profession of retail bookselling. Furthermore, it is necessary and should be possible to reward the skilled, trained and arduous labor done by the best retail book clerk more highly than is the case now.

No problem attending the present condition of retail bookselling can be solved unless each man for himself determines to overcome obstacles and approaches every condition which seems at fault in his particular business full of hope, courage, and with that persistent determination that will conquer.

I fear I have said much in this lingering address which may have been unwelcome, and yet have failed to bid you welcome. To all guests, and especially to the out-of-town delegates, we bespeak for you the sincere hospitality of all the retail establishments of this city. We shall be glad if the delegates honor us with their visits, and we shall be pleased at such times to learn from them their experiences, and in turn be of such guidance to them in such matters as we may.

Again I express the hope for a most successful convention, that all of you may return to your businesses with better spirit and purpose after your brief absence. And, remember, if to some of us there shall be denied that great money reward which comes to merchants in other lines of business, we can be animated by having in thought what the glorious Milton said of books: "A good book is the precious life blood of a master spirit embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life."

And with this great tribute to good books, and with

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the hope that as merchants we have had some little part in their distribution, I bid you all success.

The chairman, Mr. Clarence Wolcott, introduced the first speaker of the evening, the Rev. Thomas Dixon, Jr. Mr. Dixon spoke at length on the subject of race prejudice, dwelling specially upon the status of the negro in the South. Touching on socialism, he said in conclusion, "Socialism, to-day, is the substitution of a soulless machine for the soul of an individual."

Mr. Dixon said, in part:

I wish to congratulate you to-night upon this organization. I wish to congratulate you as an author. I wish to express to you my heartiest sympathy, and my faith in it and its future.

The theme upon which I have to speak to you to-night is "The Secret of American Power." A distinguished critic has recently said that the American holds the centre of the stage of the world. I believe that is true. As a student of history, I believe it is true. There is a reason for this. The financial centre of the world is shifting from London to New York. The diplomatic centre is shifting to Washington.

What is the secret of the development of the American? The secret lies first in his birthright as a free man, and second in the development of his character into the most powerful individual man the world has ever seen. It is the secret of all-powerful character.

Mr. Dixon was followed by Mr. Ernest Thompson-Seton, who spoke on "The Point of View in Nature Study." Mr. Seton said that in the study of animals, as in the study of all other impor-

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tant subjects, the key- or guide-word is "Sympathy." He said that the old-fashioned idea was that "The animal was way down, and man, a thing of deep reason, was way up." He continued, "How absurd! We know better now. We know that man is a creature of character, instincts and a large measure of reason. The animal has the beginnings of all that man has. In other words, the difference is one of degree." In support of his statement, Mr. Seton related a number of stories of remarkable animal sagacity.

The next speaker was E. W. Townsend ("Chimmie Fadden.") His "reminiscences," jokes, and sallies kept the booksellers convulsed with laughter. His speech was most thoroughly enjoyed.

W. Millard Palmer, of Grand Rapids, Mich., next spoke on the

### POSSIBILITIES OF THE REFORM FROM THE BOOK-SELLERS' POINT OF VIEW

I suppose that this topic was assigned to me at this point in the programme in the hope that you probably would see the rising sun of a resurrected booktrade before I got through. I wish to assure you that I shall speak of only two or three things that particularly interest every man who is a participant in the work of publishing books, of selling books, and, particularly, of writing books.

Some three years ago a number of booksellers and publishers got together to see if something could be done to stay the decline of the bookselling trade, as well

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as to put it on a stable basis. In order that that might be done, The American Publishers' Association enacted what they called "Reform Resolution Number One," to place certain new publications on a net basis, to publish them at a price which should be a fixed price, from which not one cent of discount should be given by any bookseller, whether he should be a professional bookseller or a department store manager.

Now why was this done? I see before me to-night, gentlemen who have been in the bookselling business for half a century. I, myself, in my short experience in the bookselling business, remember that even twenty years ago we were in a prosperous condition. But what was the condition three years ago? It was a time to call in a coroner upon the bookselling trade. The publishers and booksellers decided to try to do something to save the trade from demoralization. The step was taken; the patient has been resuscitated; and we are now, to-night, in this great city of New York, the great financial centre of the world, at a crisis—at a crisis in the bookselling, book-producing, book-writing of America. Why?

When the reform was started, we urged upon the publishers that they should put, first of all, above everything else, novels—books of fiction—upon a net basis, and why? Because those were the trade books; because those who wished to profit by bad methods, advertised them at cut prices—not between the cost and cost, but at cost, and below cost; and we said, "It is essential that you first of all protect the price upon the novel."

Now there were publishers and booksellers who feared that if the radical step of placing bookselling upon a net basis were taken it could not be accomplished. The publishers decided to put the net price upon other classes of literature—upon history, upon biography, travel, theology, and other lines. Did that accomplish any good?



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It accomplished one thing. It demonstrated to the booksellers of America that they could do that which they were fearful they could not accomplish; that a price could be placed upon a book, on a copyrighted book, and that that price could be maintained, in New York, in San Francisco, in New Orleans, in any place in the United States. It demonstrated that the publisher can put a price upon a book and have it maintained. If he can do it on a book of travel, he can do it on a book of fiction.

The crisis is this: I believe that to-morrow, in convention assembled, the American Booksellers' Association, representing six hundred booksellers of the United States of America (there used to be three thousand), will enact resolutions requesting the publishers to place fiction upon a net basis. If this is done, the profession of bookselling will again be placed upon a dignified and profitable basis. If it is not done—I wish to emphasize it; I say it with due respect to the American Publishers' Association, and to every member therein—if it is not done, you publishers, you authors, as well as we booksellers will live to rue the day. Let it be distinctly understood that the fact having been demonstrated that the price can be maintained, every book that is published can be placed upon the net list. And the sooner every bookseller gets from his mind the idea that he must give a single cent of discount, the earlier you will see the trade upon a safe and profitable basis. . . .

Only yesterday, on the train coming from the West, I clipped this London item from *The Chicago Record-Herald*:

Referring to the new movement to which I alluded last week for an improvement in the dispersal of literature in this country, the Bookshops Company has now established itself at 34 Norfolk Strand. Writing from there Frederick Whelan says that the new bookshops will endeavor to provide that stimulus for readers which

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the German system has proved to be so useful in Germany. In a lecture delivered by William Heinemann before the Associated Booksellers of Great Britain he said: "The local bookseller in Germany, particularly in the smaller towns, has an establishment which every educated person in the place visits from time to time. On the arrival of the Leipsic parcel he inspects the newest publications and sees them within a few days of their issuing from the publishers. He is thus able to handle them, examine them and select from them."

And that day shall come in this country! We who have been struggling up the height on this side will from the top view the promised land on the other side.

Mr. A. Growoll, managing editor of *The Publishers' Weekly*, then delivered the following address on

### THE BENEFITS OF TRADE ASSOCIATION

Whatever tends to dignify the ancient and honorable business of the bookseller touches my heart. It has been my privilege, as man and boy, to witness the vast development of the American booktrade for nearly half a century, during a large part of which time I have been more or less directly identified with the making and the sale of books. Indeed, I may say that I have been associated with every department of the publishing and book-selling business—printing and binding books, publishing and selling them, and even writing some—for which there has been a limited demand. Then, as you know, I have written about books, and have endeavored, in an humble way, to act as a pathfinder for many of you in your search after unknown or little known books. But before I cultivated any of these gentle arts I cultivated the habit of buying books, and I am able to testify that

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my digressions in that direction brought me many times into contact with a race of men whom it was an honor to know; men who seemed to feel that in placing a good book in the hands of a reader they were more than traffickers, more than dealers in merchandise; that they were weighted with the responsibilities, and dowered with the privileges of the educator, who seeks to make the world wiser and better by the diffusion of useful knowledge.

A cursory view of the great progress of the nation, especially during the last three decades, conclusively shows that the business of publishing and selling books has not as fully shared as it might have done in that marvellous development. In saying this I do not overlook the enormous and wonderful increase in the production of text-books and works of reference, nor the amazing consumption of what may be termed "light literature," or the increasing and now amazing issues of the periodical press. Neither am I unmindful of the great increase of publications in the departments of miscellaneous literature; and yet the fact remains that relatively, considering the increase in population and of the purchasing ability, the great body of our American people to-day give comparatively little encouragement to the American author, the American publisher and bookseller, in their all-important work of developing an American literature.

Consider for a moment what has been done during the last thirty years in rearing and maintaining the college, the seminary, the grammar and the common school; consider, also, the enlargement of the public library system, and the wide expansion along all other educational lines; and then remember how comparatively few people of a refined intelligence, while adorning their homes with all the fads and fancies of the decorative art to set off elegant and luxurious furnishings, make no provision

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whatever for the bookcase and the book! Take any one of our larger towns and cities, and you will find a score, more or less, of flourishing establishments packed to the full with costly woods and fabrics set in luxurious frames and shimmering in all the dazzling lights of high decorative art; and yet in the town or city where you will readily find all these the business places which minister to the higher wants are languishing for proper support, and many of our trade have therefore been obliged to keep up a constant fight to make both ends meet! I am no pessimist, but I know that no city, for its own sake, can afford to be without such an educational centre as yours, where men can go and keep themselves in touch with the intellectual movements of the time; that no home, however rich the owner or how elegant and luxurious its furnishings, can be in the best sense a home where no provision is made for the intellectual wants. The newspaper and the magazine will not supply this want. The paper novel cannot do it. It is only the *book*—the good book, in the truest sense—that can prevent a sordid, heavy atmosphere from settling down upon such a habitation.

But let us not be too hard on the leisure class. An educator placed by Providence in the centre of a population, either great or small, must not only make himself felt by the very powers within him, but himself must possess a keen sense of his own responsibility to his friends and neighbors. In order to accomplish this he must be a man conscious alike to his opportunity and duty. He must not sit in an easy chair and wait until he is recognized as an educator. He must first recognize himself; then insist that what he has to give he is prepared to give there and now. He must stand on his calling, not with a supercilious conceit, but with an intelligent and persistent earnestness that will command respect and win success, according to the measure of his

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individual ability. I hold and ever have held that the bookseller is an educator; but an educator who has never been recognized as he deserved; and the question I now put to you is, *Whose fault is it?* Is it the fault of the public, or is the fault all his own that he has come largely to be classed as a mere dealer of merchandise, rather than as an essential factor in the great educational movement of our times?

As an evidence of a disposition on the part of the American bookseller to place himself upon his proper level, we all hailed with delight the formation of this association. There was need for organization so long as we did not overlook the rights and duties of the individual, so long as we bore in mind the fact that the interests of the publisher and the bookseller must be identical, if both would enjoy health and prosperity.

The publisher must use you as his distributing agent. He cannot reach directly the public of this continent, for while he can make a book for a reader in California, he must use the bookseller to place the book in his hand; and is it not common sense, is it not in the interest of all good fellowship, is it not a good principle in business, that the publisher should remember that the bookseller is his agent, indispensable to his success, and that the publisher should not only stand by the bookseller, but make the bookseller's interest his interest by seeing to it that all the bookseller's rights are maintained—in a word, that the publisher should use and not abuse the bookseller. The fact that this was often overlooked formed a reason, and a sufficient reason, for an organization like this, which by its scope and power would compel a redress not only of all present wrongs, but the establishment of all just rights, and at the same time lift your business to its old-time dignity, and keep it before the public in every city, and town, and village, that the bookstore is an educational institution; one as indispensable, according to its meas-

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ure, as a school or college, yet placing no tax upon the town or State for its support, and demanding from the individual buyer only a reasonable mercantile profit on its sales, which profit would after all represent only a fair wage for an honest day's work.

The relation between publisher and bookseller should be a mutual one. But, gentlemen, you must see to it, as the publisher must see to it, that practically the interest be *one*. The publisher cannot help you unless you will help yourselves. Heretofore the two interests were drawing apart. This was not wholly the fault of either side. What was wanted was that the tendency should be the other way. It will take time to establish this principle, but it can be done; in fact, a surprisingly large share of the work has already been accomplished through the two organizations so recently called into existence.

As you know there have been booktrade organizations before this. There have been booktrade organizations as a matter of fact since the formation of the Boston Association of Booksellers in 1794. None of these survived very long. And why did they die? Perhaps it was because their members did not keep full faith with each other; or they built too largely on a purely mercantile or selfish ground; or because some of its members came to look upon it as an organization that might possibly put a little more money in the individual purse, and so the short candle went out.

As that sturdy champion of booktrade reform, the late Mr. Anson D. F. Randolph, to whom I am indebted for much of the inspiration of my address, once said on a similar occasion: "No movement for reform can live or flourish if there be not woven in its fibre something more than the symbol of a dollar. There must be connected with it a sentiment to induce; an unselfish motive to attract; a living purpose to confirm and hold. A reform so established will in time work out not only

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pecuniary benefits, but produce still larger results for the betterment of society, in the building up and broadening of the individual character. Even in these days of fierce competition and broad materialism the old trade proverb, 'every man for himself,' does not go unchallenged. The world is not as selfish as it was of old; so that while standing for one's rights there is a growing disposition to recognize the rights of others. I put it as an axiom, that the man in trade who, without being unjust to himself, seeks always to be just to his neighbor, is the man in the long run who, having the same measure of ability, will win the most and hold the longest."

Now, in this organization of our honored trade, if it would enjoy the largest measure of success, the element of pure individual selfishness must be eliminated. The bookseller in the town and the publisher in the city must be true to his neighbor as to himself. Bear in mind that we are not dealers in mere merchandise; that we are educators, each governed by a proper spirit of enterprise and industry, and that if one be favored with a larger success than the other, it is not to be the result of overreaching or underreaching, but rather the result of a broader intelligence, a clearer recognition of the laws that govern trade, an alert industry, and a quickened apprehension that has made two blades of grass to grow where only one grew before.

Major F. T. Leigh, of Harper & Brothers, being called upon for a few remarks, said:

It is a great pleasure to be here this evening. I have been uplifted, entertained, and amused by some of the speakers, and exceedingly interested by others. I have been especially interested by those speakers who have touched and dwelt upon trade topics.

The principle underlying the statements of our friend,

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Mr. Growoll, is one that I sincerely believe in. The publisher must rely upon his good friends, customers and associates—the booksellers—for the distribution of the property which he distributes on behalf of the author. Of course, I am not authorized in any way to speak for any of them, but I know we shall await with great interest the result of your deliberations.

As a publisher whose station is in this city, I am glad that it has been my good fortune to have been at this dinner. I am glad your Association has been so prosperous. I am glad that the problems of the trade have been approached with so much conservatism and intelligence.

Mr. Horace H. Jackson, of Bridgeport, Conn., closed the evening with the following remarks:

I little thought, Mr. President, and members of this Association, as I stood to-night in the hotel door, a few blocks up, that I should have occasion to use the words I saw across the street. The words are as follows: "An All Star Stock Company." I dwelt upon those words for two or three minutes, and I began to think, "That means that every one whose name is upon the programme is a star, a star of unlimited magnitude." When I came up here, and picked up this *menu* I said, "Surely, here are repeated the words I saw on Broadway, 'An All Star Stock Company.'"

When I was a lad, I went to work in a bookstore. I didn't understand much about books; but it was in the days when the publisher had wooed the bookseller, and they were united. They were living peacefully together. Each recognized the other's function, his worth, his merit, his dependence on the other. And then came a time—about '80—when there came into the family high words, misunderstandings, and the members of the fam-



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ily became estranged, as you often see it reflected in the domestic circle. For almost twenty years they were in that condition. About three years ago, by the cement of kind words and gentle influences they were brought a bit closer. They have gone on successfully and kindly for three years. They each recognize that they made a mistake in the years gone by. They want a closer union, and I believe we find it to-day in such meetings as this.

### *WOULD A SCHOOL FOR BOOKSELLERS BE DESIRABLE?*

On October 15 the League discussed the question, "Would a School for Booksellers be desirable or practicable?" There was present a much smaller number than usual, a fact that did not seem to augur well for a general interest in the question; but those who were present, it is gratifying to note, took the matter quite seriously, and spoke interestingly.

The subject was opened by Mr. W. H. Parker, who, as chairman of the Entertainment Committee, read the following telegrams and communications from out-of-town members and others who were unable to be present. One of the most interesting of these came from the West, from a well-known bookseller who, however, wished to remain *incognito*. This is given below:

The first thing that strikes one when the question of the practicability of a school for booksellers' assistants is brought up, is the memory of the discouraging task of breaking in new help and cheerfully paying old help that only hinders.

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My personal experience during the past twenty years as a clerk and employer has led me to believe that such a school would be a grand idea, if the practical difficulties could be solved.

If the idea is to charge the ambitious candidate for the bookselling profession anything more than a nominal sum, would not most intelligent young men, at least young men intelligent enough to make a success of the book business, rather prefer to put in their time acquiring a knowledge of some business wherein the financial returns were more alluring?

It might be practicable to start night schools in the big centres of the East, to be held say once a week, open to clerks already in the book business and to candidates for positions.

The weekly lectures could be contributed by leading bookmen in different departments of work, and quiz exercises could be conducted by some one else on the preceding lecture.

Out of some hundreds of clerks who have worked with me and for me I can think of only about half a dozen who have made successful bookmen. We have been cursed by two kinds of clerks. First, the ordinary school graduate, or young man forced to work for a living, who tells you that he is a great reader and thinks the book business just the thing for him. His reading consists of some of the six best sellers, and when some one asks him for Becker's Charicles he doesn't know whether it is mixed drink or a fancy pudding. He is hazy, or ignorant entirely, with regard to the difference between Ben Jonson and Samuel Johnson and their contemporaries. Nine times out of ten he has never read a simple work on English or American literature; much less foreign literatures. The idea of studying literature or publishers' catalogues never occurs to him, nor does he do it on suggestion. Sometimes, however, he has a good address and can sell goods, and is retained on that

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account. Our second curse has been the real literary boy who reads Walter Pater and Matthew Arnold and insists on talking of them to the customer who wants a copy of "St. Elmo." I have seen clerks of this description talk to customers for an hour, inflicting upon their victims their own beautiful ideas of what should constitute a book, and most of the time the intending purchaser leaves without buying a thing. It sometimes seems to me that it is impossible for a really bookish man to combine good horse sense and business ability with his knowledge.

Now a school such as suggested would be valuable in training young men with literary instincts in several things:

1. Technical terms used in the trade.
2. Knowledge of American and English and foreign catalogues.
3. Simple guides to American and foreign literature.
4. Methods of waiting on customers.

This is a wide field and embraces the policy of trying to sell subscription books, finer editions, tirelessness in showing anything which might be of interest; paying attention to the customers and not getting into arguments about the policy of Russia in the East, and the negro in the West; paying attention to keeping the stock displayed and kept clean; taking an interest in the business and working as hard for \$40 or \$50 a month as though \$200 a month were the remuneration.

Naturally we can all think of any amount of details to bring before candidates, but they do not suggest a practical plan for establishment of the school.

Mr. F. L. Bickford, of the Charles E. Lauriat Company, of Boston, wrote as follows:

No school can make a bookseller that does not include a most minute personal study of human nature. A

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special course in literature is of invaluable assistance to a bookseller, but in my mind the knowledge of people comes first.

The school at Albany makes good library clerks, but does not make librarians. It seems to me the cases are nearly parallel. The school would most certainly make book clerks, but would they not know too much to "tolerate the ignorance of the public" and make good salesmen?

Undoubtedly every first-class bookstore has its own peculiar method of selling books, founded on years of experience. With a knowledge of literature and history as a foundation and a liking for the business, a young man will pick up, in such a store, a knowledge of editions by the time he knows enough of people to become salesman and will have fitted into the particular phase of the business for which he is best adapted by temperament.

Mr. Albert Brandt, of Trenton, N. J., wrote:

I do, *most decidedly*, believe that a school for book-selling would be both desirable and thoroughly practicable.

A trained bookseller can sell books, and in the doing be a benefactor to even the grandchildren of his patrons, where the untrained clerk, unless a born bookseller, may or may not sell books—or may even by clumsiness prevent the sale of the very books a customer may be seeking.

And think of the difference in the "holy of holies" of the hearts of the two—what of their difference in self-respect. The one is the gladly-welcome *friend* of the brains, the breeding, the heart, the conscience and the culture of a community (or at least of a store's clientele)—the other—well, an unavoidable impediment of

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what once was and may again be the most glorious profession!

Think of the courage such a school would give to all good booksellers—employers and employees! A good soldier is none the less a valiant warrior when fighting alone, but when he stands shoulder to shoulder with thousands of others his peers in nobility of ideals, in honor and stout-heartedness, he may well hope to vanquish the cohorts of the dollar-eight novel, the circulating library, and the trading stamp!

Mr. W. B. Clarke, of Boston, wrote:

I think a school for bookselling would be desirable. I do not think, under present conditions, that it would be practicable.

Messrs. J. R. Weldin & Co., of Pittsburg, Pa., wrote:

Think school for booksellers would be good if you can get boys that want to learn anything. We find they all know it nowadays. It can only be acquired by hard work.

Mr. W. Millard Palmer, of Grand Rapids, Mich., telegraphed as follows:

I make affirmative answer to question. For years my dream has been of profitable bookselling permitting such training. It is desirable, and continued improvement of trade conditions will make it practicable.

The Caldwell-Sites Co., of Staunton, Va., wrote:

In our opinion such a school would be of great value, not only in that it would supply needed information to

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persons desiring to enter the profession of bookselling, but such a school would almost necessarily be of great value, on general lines, to any person who would take advantage of its teachings. We shall be very glad to see a movement looking to the establishment of such a school begun.

Mr. John J. Daly, of New York, sent the following communication :

Yes. It would give work to some one. It would help a boy with brains. It would cause discussion. It would help the technical end.

No. Silly until conditions change. The big stores are the best educators. The landlord could knock all the frills off such an education.

I know of only one exclusive dealer in books in this city. He sells books the same as your grocer sells butter. He cares not at all for the pride of calling.

I understand there are not fifty regular bookstores in this country. All sell stationery, pictures, etc. It is nearly the same with chemists. Still there is a college for them.

Then again what use would the department store have for a college graduate?

When could the regular clerk expect even \$25 per week?

What schedule of wage encouragement could the large booksellers of New York give?

Mr. A. Growoll, of *The Publishers' Weekly*, being called upon to open the discussion said, in part :

On general principles, I am in favor of some sort of elementary training of the boys who are ambitious to become booksellers. Such training like the training of

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small children should be done at home, that is in the bookstore, under the careful guidance of the master, rather than in the kindergarten. If the master of the store, or his trained journeymen, haven't the time or ability to undertake this important duty, then the apprentice must get his training either by himself, as he does, in most cases, under present conditions, or he might get it in some methodical way, outside of the store, as he gets it now in Germany and in Italy.

Mr. Growoll expressed himself optimistic of the ultimate establishing of a school for booksellers, even if the beginning must be on the most primitive lines, and expressed the hope that the Booksellers' League might pave the way toward such an end by giving its monthly meetings a more practical turn than had been the custom recently.

Mr. Charles A. Burkhardt, of E. P. Dutton & Co., said:

I would answer both questions with yes. A school for booksellers would certainly be desirable, both to employers and employees. There is no school, however, that will teach the business as that of experience.

A school for booksellers could not do more than teach the rudiments of the business; it is impossible for one man to thoroughly master it, and were it possible he would have no more use for the greater part of his knowledge than the average man had for the dead languages.

The man who succeeds is not always the one with a college training, or whose brain is a store-house of knowledge, but the man who makes the most of the knowledge he possesses.

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In the larger cities the business is specialized, one house making a specialty of Scientific books, another of Medical, a third of Educational, a fourth of Architectural, etc., each branch requiring a special training, and of such stores as do a general business no two work along the same lines.

A school, therefore, in my opinion could only prepare the scholar for the higher school of experience by giving lessons in history, biography, literature, bookkeeping, methods of selling, use of trade lists, study of publishers' catalogues, arrangement of stock, etc.

A good salesman is not always a man with a thorough knowledge of the business; I have known salesmen who never read a book sell more than those who made it a point to keep posted.

I do not think a school for booksellers would be a financial success; but it may be made self-supporting, especially with evening classes. The young men lack ambition, due probably to the fact that there is not enough money in the business to warrant their taking a great interest in the study of a profession that pays so poorly as the book business. Were they to devote their time to the study of law or medicine they would stand a chance of dying rich, which is a crime the bookseller is never guilty of.

Mr. W. H. Parker, also of E. P. Dutton & Co., said:

In considering the question before us to-night, I have come to the conclusion that while a school for booksellers would be desirable, it not only would not be practicable or even possible, if such a school proposes the making of a perfect book salesman. The multitudinous demands to which a book salesman is subjected are so overwhelming that no person in his senses would



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attempt its beginning. Let us consider what a perfect book salesman should be and know. The requirements come under two groups, and the first group is the most important and hardest to teach.

First, he must be a gentleman.

Second, he should have abundance of tact.

Third, ability to make friends and to keep them.

Fourth, ability to make sales of books not asked for by his customers, and to sell better editions and more expensive books than his customer had made up his mind to buy.

Fifth, ability to gather from his customer his taste and style of reading and to suggest other kindred books.

Sixth, a good general knowledge of authors and their style, aside from their literary value.

Seventh, a knowledge of literature.

Eighth, a knowledge of history, likewise a knowledge of scientific books, architectural, medical, cook, and law books, works on mythology, astronomy, geography, etc.

Ninth, a technical knowledge of the manufacture of books, including a knowledge of grades of leather, paper, printing and type.

Tenth, an experience with catalogues, how to use them and also how to make them.

Eleventh, he must be a fortune teller, that he may know from seeing the cover of a new book how many copies he can sell.

To enumerate more would only tire you; but most of us realize that there are many more points on which a bookseller should have knowledge. In fact, about one book there are twelve important things to be learned and many minor points which may become important with certain customers such as: (1) publisher, (2) title, (3) author, (4) price, (5) binding, (6) paper, (7) type, (8) number of volumes, (9) features of different editions, (10) class of literature, (11) quality of writing, (12)

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plot of story, (13) location of stock, etc. At the rate of at least 5000 new books each year the twelve points about each book would make 60,000 strings on his finger, to remember to bring home the spool of thread his wife wants to-night sure. And the publishing business did not start October, 1903, either. Of course many points I have named can be grouped and many are not necessary to every day experience; but the man who gets the most of them, with ability to sell, will win out in the long run. The subject really narrows down to the ability to sell. A man who can sell, not fill an order, but sell a tub of butter, can sell a book.

Almost every one of the thirty-five members present spoke at greater or less length on the subject, the consensus of opinion being that it would be desirable to have a school for booksellers, even though the prospect of its practicability seemed remote. One speaker suggested that a beginning might be made through a correspondence school, and another that the Booksellers' League propose topics and draft a series of questions to be studied by the apprentice under the direction of his employer. A proposition to open a tentative class for the instruction of the use of catalogues and bibliographic reference books under Charles A. Nelson of the Columbia University Library and others, was referred to the Board of Managers for consideration. J. W. Nichols, Secretary of the American Booksellers' Association, spoke at length upon the advantage of training to the canvasser for subscription books and thought that the same training would

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help the man who kept a bookstore. He particularly dwelt upon the advisability of the book-seller's adopting some of the tactics of the subscription bookseller, not in handling clap-trap books, but in pushing the sales of the better class of books beyond the confines of his store.

At the dinner held on November 11, Mr. William J. Long entertained the League with a most interesting account of the traits of the wild animals that had come to his notice.

At a meeting of the Board of Managers, held on November 5, Mr. James B. Brigham, who had served the League for eight years, owing to pressure of work, resigned his position. Acting on Mr. Brigham's request the Board passed resolutions acknowledging the faithful service of their outgoing treasurer.

### WHAT SELLS A BOOK?

The dinner given at the Aldine Association on January 13, 1904, was well attended and highly successful, an impromptu discussion of the methods employed in selling subscription books being a noteworthy feature of the occasion. President Cass Richardson, after those present had done full justice to an excellent *menu*, introduced Mr. Francis J. Bellamy as a guest of the evening. Mr. Bellamy, speaking on the subject, "What Books People Buy," stated his belief that the spirit of a book determines public taste in the long

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run, but that the bookseller shapes it in the beginning because he sizes up a customer and chooses a book for him accordingly. Mr. Bellamy thought that the booksellers are really the advance agents of literary taste in America.

The next guest of the evening was Mr. Walter H. Page, who said, in part:

What sells a book is a great conundrum. I have never found any one who could answer it. Some books we can account for after the event; some few take great hold on human experience; some strike the popular fancy, hold our attention for a day, a week, or a month, and then go by. But I doubt if any man can be sure in advance as to the sale of a book by an unknown author. There is one very large class of books that sell—the books that people buy for furniture. But what makes them sell?

Occasionally we know by intuition that a book will sell, and it seems to me we—both publishers and booksellers—should cultivate this instinct. Do we study this point with sufficient scientific seriousness? There is a science in it. The bookselling business is not yet begun to be done in this country. If we brought to this quite the same shrewdness, the same enterprise, the same ability that other men have brought to other business interests in this country, a book that would sell 100,000 copies could be made to sell another 100,000, and another. The only reason it doesn't is that we haven't found *how*; but somebody *will* find out some day. To-day a book sells 100,000 copies in six months, and you cannot sell 100,000 in the next six months, and we cannot tell you how to do it; but I know there are 100,000 people more who would read it if you knew how to get at them. Few households of well-to-do people have a fair representation of

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books in proportion to furniture, carpets, etc. Some houses in the West foist 1,000,000 copies of a poor book upon the people by subscription and instalment plans; it is our duty to do this with our good books. Somebody will some day make a fortune by finding out the proper method and machinery for the distribution of books. It is time we were waking up in the booktrade to do what is done in other lines of business.

There is a sort of satisfaction in handling a book, in having to do with it, if it be a really good book, that makes us live in an atmosphere of greatness; even in our humble relations we catch some reflection of the glory that makes the craft immortal. The more widely we spread good literature through a democracy the greater our service to our fellow-men. It is that that makes us feel more highly of our trade. From the author in his lonely study to the last man handling the finished book, there is a trail of glory that lifts it up, and in the measure that we spread its benefits among mankind we feel the measure of our success.

We publishers and you booksellers are all gathered in the same task. In the practical, everyday workings of our life the author comes with his manuscript and says: "The fruits of my midnight toil." We bow reverently, read cautiously and print. We take the book to you and say: "Gentlemen, a great author—a great book—we are the humble servants of genius," and we deliver the result to you. You take it hesitatingly, order a few copies, pay your bills sixty, ninety days thereafter, and then when we come to see you on our next round and tell you we have another great author, you look up wisely and say, "Oh, yes, you had one when you were here before. We have him still." The author is approached with a very small check and very large regrets. "The book after all was too good to sell—the booksellers told us it was too good to be appreciated." So the poor pub-

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lisher has his ribs cracked on one side and on the other, and finds no glory in it.

Mr. Frank N. Doubleday, also a guest, confined himself to asking the members of the League if there were any way by which subscription books could be sold in large quantities through the bookstores. This brought forth an interesting discussion, which was in substance as follows:

Mr. C. A. Burkhardt: "Most subscription books sell on the instalment plan. No bookseller has capital enough to put out books on the instalment plan."

Mr. W. H. Parker: "It takes entirely different training to sell books by subscription. In one case the customer comes to you; in the other case you have to go to the customer. It is a very different matter. The bookseller's profit is not large enough to allow him to go out on subscription books."

Mr. Doubleday: "Nor have young publishers much capital, yet the publisher is willing to carry accounts and pay even up to 25 per cent. commission for the sake of having trade."

Mr. S. F. McLean: "Discredit has come to the subscription book business through the great amount of 'faking' that has been done. Many subscription houses deal unfairly by the bookseller who acts as their agent. The self-respecting bookseller has fought shy because of this."

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Here several members related their experiences with publishers of subscription books.

Mr. Parker: "People soon tire of subscription books. We have sold several thousand dollars' worth of subscription books for people who have become tired of them."

Rev. C. F. Cutter: "As to the merit of a book, certainly it is never demerit that sells a book. I do not hesitate to say to publishers, without animosity: 'Bring us less trash and your good work shall turn out better results.'"

Mr. F. H. Marling: "Mr. Page is right in saying we have not yet the ability to extend our business as is done in other trades. The 10-cent magazines have shown us how. The people who read 10-cent magazines are in large measure the people who never had read a 25-cent or 35-cent magazine. We have to create a new market; the people who buy carpets and furniture must be taught to buy books. Some firms have learned this and have made fortunes by issuing large quantities of low-priced reprints for school teachers and others who cannot afford \$1.50 books."

Mr. A. Dwight Stratton: "It is after all earnestness all along the line that counts in the sale of a book."

Mr. Page, following up the theme of his talk, told of a wealthy man living within twelve miles of New York whose house was lined with fine bookcases, in which he found only two magazines

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and a broken doll. The bookseller had not got in his work.

### NINTH ANNUAL DINNER

Over a hundred members of the League and a few friends comfortably filled the main dining-room of the Aldine Association on the evening of February 10, 1904, on the occasion of its ninth annual dinner. A good dinner was served and an exceptionally attractive list of speakers had been secured, all of whom were present, so that the affair was in every way a success.

Mr. Norman H. Hapgood, the well-known journalist and author of "lives" of Washington and Lincoln, etc., was the first speaker, his topic being "The Relation of Journalism to Literature." The keynote of his thought was that the modern newspaper is the pioneer in establishing our literary standards to-day. "The best writing, on the whole," said he, "appears in the newspapers. They tell us their news in a short, simple, direct way. People want to know what is going on and what is real in the world, and they want the best and most accurate information. While compared with Europe we fall hopelessly short in everything that can be grouped under the head of *belles-lettres*, in the literature of action, of industry, of political economy, we are in the lead. What men of action have written is permanent." He defended the "yellow jour-



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nal," saying that instead of dragging down the more intelligent readers it lifts up those who never read anything before, and closed by saying, "Whatever may be said of modern journalistic writing from the point of view of finish, it is to be judged not as an end but as a beginning."

Mr. Hapgood's remarks were followed by an original topical song by W. J. Brogan, which introduced friendly hits upon several members of the League.

### ETHICS OF PUBLISHING

The Rev. Merle St. Croix Wright, pastor of the Lenox Avenue Unitarian Church, speaking from the point of view of the general public, offered the publishers wise counsel in the ethics of their calling. He said in part:

I contend, though it may be dangerous here, that the public has its rights. It seems to me what the public ought to have from the publishers is more sympathy, more justice, more love. The publisher, like everybody else, is not in business to sacrifice himself, nor yet is he in business to sacrifice other people. The difference between good men and bad men in business is simply that the good man gets his profits by energy and honesty and acumen, the bad man by close figuring and fraudulent means. Business is a service in which you serve yourself, to be sure, but you serve others also. There is a new maxim in science, that the struggle for existence is a struggle for others. In other words, you cannot lift up civilization or level it off on any high plane unless you look beyond yourself. These things do not at all

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interfere with the conduct of business save for those men who are inferior in business and must use low means for low ends. The public should be served by the publisher as by other business men, not superficially but profoundly. There was a time when this doctrine would have been laughed at. It is now held part of the character of a whole man, and a time will come when not to possess it will mark you as an inferior man. If you are to win honor in your profession and have your profession respected, it must have some pretence, at least, of social regard; it must look beyond mere social advantage and must do something for love. There was a time when the honor and pride of a firm counted for a great deal. That is what I think ought to prevail in business to-day, and ought to be the aim of the publisher. He is the business representative of the intellectual kingdom and ought to live up to that reputation. The early printers were such men—they were scholars and artists, real benefactors. Look at their paper and type and the preservation of their books; we can scarcely improve them or equal them to-day. Theirs was the result of honest effort, and only such men have a right in any business, and especially in the higher walks of business. In proportion to the nobility of the calling there must be the endeavor to live up to the high level of the profession. I claim the publisher has a duty to safeguard the public; he should be in a sense a mentor and guardian of the public, which has been called a "perpetual minor," and cannot take care of itself because it does not know how. If we have ideals what are they for? If we stand for anything good we should put it into our business. The publisher can do what he will do. In any business there is room for the exercise of free will within the limits set by necessity, unless it is a failing business. Every high-minded worker works for the work's sake and for those whom the work will ulti-

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mately reach. I would suggest that the publisher look to the quality as well as to the quantity of his works—to seeing that they are useful, decent, uniform of standard, and even that in outward ways they minister to the benefit of the people with whom they are brought in contact.

Mr. Wright, good-naturedly referring to the American Publishers' Association as "the most arbitrary of trusts," stated his belief as a reader and buyer that the net rules are unfair. "You are losing as customers," said he, "the people who know books, and driving many of them to subterfuges to obtain books anyhow. You will drive people out of the way of buying books—many now go to libraries instead. But real readers cannot use libraries, and should have a discount on books. Educate and enlarge your public by putting your prices down, graduating your prices according to the classes of your public till you get pretty far down."

Mr. Wright further discussed several faults of the publishing business as they strike the public, viz.: The issuing of several successive editions of a book from *de luxe* to paper covers; the 25 per cent. tax on imported books; the issuing of certain volumes of standard authors only in the most expensive form; fraudulent tables of contents; bad manufacture; the issuing of old stories of a living author as apparently new books, etc. "While I think very highly of the publishing business and its personnel," he concluded,

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"I think the public could suggest a good many improvements that would be a vast gain to the unilluminated public on the outside."

Major F. T. Leigh, of Harper & Brothers, was called upon to reply for the trade, and said the publisher would be only too glad to sell books at a cheaper price if he could. "I believe it is the intent of publishers," said he, "to make the prices as cheap as they can be made. The author takes most of the profits in royalties, and what little is left the bookseller takes in discounts. Most of the leading publishing houses are careful to publish only the best books."

Mr. James Barnes, an old favorite with the League, then entertained the members with some amusing stories, and Mr. Warren V. Darling sang "The Toreador."

Mr. Irving Bacheller, author of "Eben Holden" and other successful novels, spoke of the great change in tone, from dismal to cheerful, that had come over books and readers in the last generation. "Books of any time," said he, "are simply the reflections of conditions which surround them. To-day a book having a theme of hatred and envy is a failure before it is printed; a book must keep up to the note of happiness, otherwise it will not sell."

Mr. William Alexander Linn, author of "Horace Greeley," "The Story of the Mormon," etc., who began his career as a reporter on the New

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York *Tribune* in the days of Greeley and served on the New York *Evening Post* under Bryant and later under Godkin, remarked that when asked by the committee to give "reminiscences" he felt that he had really passed the line into the ranks of the venerable; nevertheless, he entertained the company with delightful recollections of those great men.

Banjo selections by Messrs. Brogan and Gedney closed the evening's entertainment, and a unanimous vote of thanks was extended to speakers and entertainers.

### NINTH ANNUAL MEETING

The ninth annual meeting of the League was held on the evening of March 9. The Board of Managers reported that the membership had settled down to 134 and that the treasurer had a balance of \$326 in hand. Also, that it had been decided to arouse interest in securing new members by awarding to any one who introduced five new members a gold League button.

Mr. Theodore E. Schulte, of the American Baptist Publication Society, was unanimously elected president, and was supported during his term by Mr. Cass Richardson as first vice-president; Charles A. Burkhardt as second vice-president; W. H. Parker, as treasurer, and Francis Gilman as secretary.

After the business meeting the president an-

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nounced the topic for discussion, "Do Public Libraries Help or Hinder the Sale of Books," and introduced as the first speaker Arthur E. Bostwick, of the New York Public Library, who is chairman of the committee of the American Library Association on relations with the book-trade.

### DO LIBRARIES HELP OR HINDER THE SALE OF BOOKS?

#### *The Librarians' View*

Mr. Bostwick said, in substance:

If, as we are told, the library is responsible for taking the bread out of the mouths of poor booksellers, then the institutions which I represent must be responsible for a great deal of famine, for it last year distributed books to about 3,000,000 readers. Yet in thus distributing an average of one book a year to every inhabitant of Greater New York a library does not go far in actual book distribution. It is only the distribution of samples.

He likened the work of a library to the distribution of samples of a commercial commodity by agents which results in increased sales, and concluded:

It is the belief of the librarians that they have been arousing interest in literature. The great increase of reading is entirely due to accessions to the ranks of readers; thousands of people are reading who would not have read some years ago. Has the public library had anything to do with arousing their interest and re-

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cruiting them? It may not be possible to settle these questions definitely, but we librarians think we know the answers.

Mr. Charles Alexander Nelson, reference librarian at Columbia University and a member of the League, said that he spoke from a midway position, having been trained as a bookseller. He said, in part:

The private bookbuyer is not less a bookbuyer because he is a member of a circulating library. It has been the same in machinery, where with every improvement workingmen have cried out that the bread was being taken from their mouths, yet in the end there was more work for all of them. Libraries ultimately increase bookbuying by increasing book reading. Complaints to the contrary are too frequently made by persons who have not given the matter sufficient attention. Before the establishment of free public libraries there were hosts of small circulating libraries in the book stores—the booksellers certainly did not put them there to hurt their trade. In 1899 the *New York Mail and Express* made a canvass of the publishing houses, which brought out the opinion of the leading houses that the library is a help rather than a hindrance to the sale of books.

Mr. Nelson read statements in support of this view from leading English librarians and American publishers.

Mr. George Watson Cole stated his belief that public libraries help the sale of books. They do this, said Mr. Cole, by being themselves enormously great buyers of books. The aggregate

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number of volumes in public libraries in the United States, which was about 2,200,000 in 1850, grew slowly to 11,500,000 in 1875, but after the awakening of library interest in 1876 increased rapidly to 33,000,000 in 1895, nearly 200 per cent., and most rapidly of all to 44,500,000 in 1900, or 35 per cent. in five years; and it is probably a conservative estimate that the number is growing at the rate of 3,000,000 volumes a year. The number of libraries is growing as well as the amount of endowments. Secondly, public libraries encourage the sale of books by cultivating and fostering the reading habit. "No one who has become an habitual reader is content to read only such books as can be procured at the public library if he has the means to buy them. There is no doubt among librarians, and I believe many booksellers also share the same view, that many books are purchased by the patrons of libraries from their having first seen them in the library. I think publishers and booksellers have failed to appreciate the great value of the public library as an advertising medium. It is the reading public far more than newspaper criticisms or advertisements that determines the popularity of a book." In conclusion Mr. Cole read a number of replies he had received from librarians in answer to an inquiry identical with that under discussion, all of which agreed in the opinion that public libraries help the sale of books.



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### *The Booksellers' View*

Mr. John A. Holden presented the opposite side of the case:

Booksellers must necessarily approach the question from the commercial standpoint. The truth is, we are in business for wealth as well as recreation. The bookseller is handicapped by the free circulation of books, since many of his customers who have money seize the opportunity to save on their reading. We have an analogous case in the medical profession, which is at heart antagonistic to free dispensaries, free clinics, etc., not because such service is provided for the needy poor, but because so many who can afford to pay are free patients. If public libraries were confined to those for reference and to supplying reading matter free to those who positively have not the means to purchase there would be no doubt as to their relation to the bookseller, but when they lend out *ad libitum* the bookseller has good reason to doubt if they help his business. We all repeatedly meet in our shops people who come to look over books and calmly tell us they belong to this or that library, and are "just making a list." At such times the bookseller is not enthusiastic about the library promoting anything for him. It is all very well to promote the habit of reading, but when you make the means of satisfying that taste so cheap and plentiful the spirit of bookbuying is substantially submerged.

An amusing document in scroll form, taking the booksellers' side and signed "Pisistratus, the first librarian (or bookseller)," was read by the secretary. The discussion was then continued informally, as follows:

Mr. C. E. Butler: "All that I could say has been said by the librarians."

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Mr. C. A. Burkhardt: "The library no doubt cultivates a desire for reading, and in a measure for the ownership of books such as works of reference and standard authors; such, however, are mostly subscription books, and the bookseller does not benefit thereby, while in the case of fiction and popular books of the day the library is a direct competitor of the bookseller. The bookseller does not benefit from the purchases of the libraries, because they are in a great measure supplied by the publishers and jobbers at the same trade prices charged the booksellers. The public library—like the dispensary—should be for the poor only. There is no reason why it should be supported by public funds to the detriment of the bookseller. In my estimation, booksellers' sales would be largely increased if libraries did not exist. I will close with an epitaph:

Here lies the body of a poor bookseller,  
He was a public benefactor and a good fellow;  
But led such a damnable life as a hack  
He certainly will not want to come back."

Mr. E. G. Lawrance: "I believe most emphatically that public libraries are of great assistance to the bookseller. I think they educate the public. Many people who would read only daily papers go to the libraries and are educated up to the reading of books. Sales increase and thereby the libraries support the booksellers."

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Rev. C. F. Cutter : "We read in Boswell's Johnson that over 150 years ago this same tangle was on. Samuel Johnson in 1766 wrote to the Oxford Press about booksellers' rates, returns and misfortunes. The booktrade has always been a missionary trade, lifting up and ennobling people as no other trade does, and therein has always been at a disadvantage."

Mr. C. A. Nelson : "It is the word from mouth to mouth that gets people into the reading habit—they first get the books from the libraries. The libraries cannot supply the demand. In the Polish districts of this city they cannot get enough copies of biographies of Lincoln and our other American statesmen."

Mr. F. Gilman : "Some customers, if a book is over 75 cents net, do not buy, but say they will get it in a library. Are we in the book business as missionaries or to sell books?"

Mr. S. F. McLean : "I know of a prominent clergyman who has given up buying fiction and joined the Booklovers' Library. There is a good deal to be said on both sides. I confess the libraries have helped me a good deal ; I have been selling second-hand books to them very largely in the past two years."

Mr. W. H. Parker : "This question hinges on the question whether people like to spend money or not. As long as there are public libraries some people will not spend money for books—it is against their nature."

## THE BOOKSELLERS' LEAGUE

Mr. C. L. Bowman: "While the public library may to-day hinder a bookseller from selling a copy of a book, it may be the means of his selling the same customer the entire works of that author later on. Few people buy many books if they are not booklovers. The public library helps to make booklovers. I believe the public library really hinders booksellers from selling to persons who buy one book only at a time; but if our trade were made up of customers of this kind most of us would soon have to go out of business. I think the public library helps to make home-library builders, and the home-library builder is the valuable customer of every bookseller."

Mr. C. A. Montgomery: "Years ago people had lots of room for private libraries, and bought books for that purpose. To-day, in a large city like New York, with small apartments, it is a question of getting room for books. It seems to me this is one point that will drive people to the public libraries and make them cease to be bookbuyers."

A rising vote on the merits of the question was then called for, and though sentiment was pretty evenly divided, a majority appeared to believe that public libraries do not hinder the sale of books. The vote would no doubt have been more decidedly for the affirmative had there been a clearer understanding of the question by

## NINTH YEAR

a number present who interpreted the question to mean "do public libraries help or hinder the sale of books" *through the bookseller*. On the question as put, most of the members were satisfied that the public libraries did encourage reading, though they were not quite so certain whether they increased the bookseller's business.

## TENTH YEAR

APRIL, 1904—MARCH, 1905

THE first dinner under the new *régime* was held on the evening of April 13. After the dinner President T. E. Schulte made a brief speech conferring upon Charles A. Burkhardt the gold button recently voted for the member obtaining five new members, and then introduced the principal speaker of the evening, Professor Charles Sprague Smith, author of "Barbizon Days," and now at the head of the People's Institute at Cooper Institute.

### THE CONTRAST BETWEEN THE SCHOLAR'S LIFE AND LIFE OUT IN THE OPEN

Professor Smith, taking for his theme "The Contrast Between the Scholar's Life and the Life out in the Open," drew from his own experiences in these opposite lines of life. Speaking of his great interest in book-gathering some years ago, he told of finding for sale in Milan the entire library of an old Italian scholar, and of spending every cent he had to possess himself of many

volumes of Italian and Latin authors in superb editions. There, as in Rome, Lausanne, Copenhagen, and elsewhere, he found book-dealers of the old type, who loved their books and hated to part with them. In Copenhagen he purchased a translator's copy of Luther's Bible done into Icelandic; the bookseller discovering later that the book had already been spoken for, rather than disappoint him, sold him another copy of the same edition of the Icelandic Bible, a copy of the first edition of the Icelandic sagas, and numerous autographs and letters of Hans Christian Andersen and others, all for less than \$9. Gradually Professor Smith became, scholar-like, so absorbed in the books he had collected that he lost all track of current affairs. His present work at Cooper Union presents a striking contrast to this former life.

Standing on Cooper Union platform year after year brings one in touch with the people as a whole as distinguished from the individual. You come to realize that you are looking upon a continuous march of human life that reaches back through all the centuries to the very birth of things. Two great thoughts are suggested by it: unity and fraternity; and the "whither" of it all comes out with great clearness; it is a march toward the day and order of things when each individual shall recognize that his own interest is bound up absolutely with the interests of all, that society is founded on the recognition of human brotherhood.

He likened human progress to the writing of a great book. "‘Democracy in America,’" said

## THE BOOKSELLERS' LEAGUE

he, "is the chapter that is being written to-day. Similar chapters have been written in other countries, ending always with the words 'The experiment failed,' in every instance because the many were indifferent and the few grasping. To-day we see selfishness as it has been everywhere from the beginning of things. What is to be the close of the present chapter? The forces that would tend to make the close of that chapter like that of Rome and other countries, are insignificant. We have faith and confidence that the chapter will not be ended with the verdict: 'This experiment failed in shame.' But one's life has significance only as he works toward the unity and fraternity of mankind and gives himself to service that will assist in progress toward that goal. Would I now turn back to my books? No! I love them as much as ever; but the book I must read and help to write is the book of life, the chapter of 'Democracy in America.'"

General Rufus Rockwell Wilson, author of "Rambles in Colonial By-ways," etc., was to have been a speaker, but was kept away by illness. In his stead Mr. John R. Anderson entertained the League with reminiscences of the Civil War and incidents of the early booktrade.

### *THE AMERICAN BOOKSELLERS' ASSOCIATION DINNER*

On May 18 the Booksellers' League again joined with the American Booksellers' Associa-



tion in giving a dinner to the visiting members of the trade. Fully two hundred persons were present. After coffee had been served Mr. Clarence Wolcott, president of the American Booksellers' Association, who acted as toastmaster, introduced Lieutenant R. E. Peary, who was described in the programme (from Beaumont and Fletcher) as "a traveller, who knows men and manners, and has plow'd up the sea so far, 'till both the poles have knocked." Lieutenant Peary in a most interesting manner described some of his experiences in arctic exploration and outlined his future plans.

The next speaker, John S. Wise, was to explain where the author comes in "on books;" he kept the company roaring with good stories, in the telling of which, however, he forgot to explain where the author really does "come in."

Dr. W. H. Drummond, the genial author of "The Habitant," gave readings from his books that moved his audience now to smiles and again to tears.

The Rev. Cyrus Townsend Brady, author of "Sir Henry Morgan," "In the Wasp's Nest," etc., in a most felicitous address described how he became a syndicate and was able to turn out two books in a day, and to do a certain number of other phenomenal things of which he is persistently accused by his envious and less facile rivals. Incidentally he gave a number of figures showing, among other things, how eleven maga-

## THE BOOKSELLERS' LEAGUE

zines selected by him at random in a given month for less than three dollars furnish their readers with as much matter as would be contained in books costing over twelve dollars.

Nixon Waterman, an old friend of the Booksellers' League, made a plea for poetry, and William Joseph Long, author of a number of nature books well known to the trade, brought the evening's exercises to a close with a talk on animal life.

At its October dinner, held on the 12th of the month, George S. Merriam, one of the directors of G. & C. Merriam Co., gave an interesting history of the making of Webster's dictionary, and brief, biographical sketches of its editors and publishers. This was followed by a most suggestive talk on "Success is Governed by Natural Law," by R. U. Conger, of the Sheldon School for Scientific Salesmanship.

### *LADIES' NIGHT*

The second annual Ladies' Night of the League, held at the rooms of the Aldine Association, on November 17, was in every way a successful affair. About 130 persons, including a goodly proportion of the fair sex, were present and partook of an excellent repast. Mr. Joe Mackey, an old friend of the League's, one of the guests of the evening, being obliged to leave

## TENTH YEAR

early, entertained the company during the course of the dinner with several vocal imitations of a violin and other ventriloquistic feats, which were remarkably well done and much applauded. After the dinner was over James MacArthur, of Harper Brothers, read an interesting chapter from "Wee Macgreegor;" Joseph Lincoln, better known as "Joe" Lincoln, author of "Cap'n Eri," spoke on "Cape Cod;" and Professor C. K. Gains, of St. Lawrence University, author of "Gorgo," a historical romance just published by the Lothrop's, spoke on the Periclean age, when, as he said, the life of Athens was remarkably like that of present New York.

Altogether, the evening was a most enjoyable one, although Irving Bacheller, who was to have been a speaker, was unfortunately kept away. A gold button was conferred on S. F. McLean for having brought five new members into the League.

The first dinner of the year 1905 was held on the evening of January 17. After the prandial feast the president announced that forty-four new members had been added since the May dinner, and presented gold buttons to Messrs. Samuel Reis, J. B. Pratt and W. H. Parker for having proposed the required new members.

It was proposed and unanimously adopted that The Booksellers' League should send a delegate to take part in the annual dinner of the Pitts-

## THE BOOKSELLERS' LEAGUE

burgh Booksellers' and Stationers' Association, to be held on January 24, and to extend to the members of the trade there fraternal greetings and best wishes for their success. Mr. Cass Richardson, the vice-president of the League, was chosen delegate.

The president then referred to the death of Mr. James S. Baker, and asked the secretary to read the following minute from the records of the meeting of the Board of Trustees held on January 10:

At a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Booksellers' League, held at the office of the President, at the American Baptist Publication Society, New York City, on January 10, 1905, a motion was offered and unanimously adopted that it is the sense of the Booksellers' League that

In the death of James S. Baker the Booksellers' League, as well as the booktrade at large, has lost one of its best friends, and one of the staunchest supporters of the best traditions of the profession of bookselling—a man of integrity and justice, who was imbued with the instinct that made for true trade fellowship and public spirit.

It was further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the family of the late Mr. Baker and to his business associates.

This minute and also a resolution of regret at the death of Colonel John H. Ammon was adopted by the League, the members rising from their seats to pay their respect to the departed.

The speaker of the evening was Sidney L. Gulick, author of "The Evolution of the Jap-

## TENTH YEAR

anese," who has lived in Japan for seventeen years, and who spoke of the real meaning of the war in the East. Mr. Gulick held the attention of his hearers for nearly an hour, and was frequently applauded. Among other things he informed the League that the Japanese Government has prohibited the sale in Japan of a book entitled "Russian Cruelties," on the ground that it would inflame the prejudice of the people against Russia. He also said the Japanese Government is constantly circulating literature impressing on the people that this is not a war of the Japanese people against the Russian people, but of the Japanese Government against the Russian Government. Asked to corroborate the statement made some time ago by Mr. Kennan that in Tokyo there is a bookstore on almost every block, Mr. Gulick said that that was very likely so; but he did not think it remarkable considering that Tokyo is the principal educational centre of Japan, with a student population aggregating possibly 30,000.

Mr. H. H. Jackson, the well-known bookseller of Bridgeport, Conn., also entertained the League with a good-natured talk on the shortcomings of the trade, its ambitions and hopes, and on the advantages of combination and association.

## THE BOOKSELLERS' LEAGUE

### THE TENTH ANNUAL DINNER

The tenth annual dinner, held February 8, was attended by 140 persons. After the dinner, President Schulte spoke of the growth of the organization in its ten years of existence to an active membership of nearly 200, and expressed the hope that the League might at no distant date occupy club rooms of its own. Another gold button was awarded to J. B. Pratt for having brought five new members into the League. Letters were read from Mark Twain, Thomas Dixon, Jr., Wm. E. Long and Mayor McClellan, who were unable to be present.

The first speaker of the evening was Mr. Arthur Brisbane, editor of the *New York Evening Journal*, who spoke in part as follows:

The age we live in is an age of distribution. In the past men have been active in producing, but the important thing now is distribution, and the agents of distribution are the labor unions. In meeting you I meet the men engaged in the distribution of food to the human mind. The world has got to a point where a man who has risen at all above the lowest level desires to do some good to others. Now, if every man here would make up his mind to pick out some solid book—I don't mean a heavy book, but a book that will make people more sensible or happier—and try to sell it, you could do a great deal of good. For if you put a book before people in the right way they will buy it.

Here Mr. Brisbane told how his own editorial commendation of certain serious books, includ-

ing Spencer's "Facts and Comments," had increased their sale even beyond the publisher's expectations. "If all booksellers would do their best to prove such books salable," said he, "they would have an enormous influence on publishers and the kind of books produced."

Mr. Cass Richardson was next called upon, and gave a witty account of his trip to the meeting of the Booksellers' and Stationers' Association of Pittsburgh.

Mr. Dillon Wallace, author of "The Lure of the Labrador Wild," then narrated the story of his thrilling adventures of exploration in the interior of Labrador in company with Leonidas Hubbard, who was sent out by *Outing* in 1902 and died on the return trip from exhaustion. The story was illustrated with stereopticon views taken on the trip.

Mr. J. R. Buchanan, author of "The Story of a Labor Agitator," made a stirring appeal to the members of the trade to "sell and spread books which give the labor question a show." "It is but a short time," said he, "since the labor question began to find expression in books; but we are now on the threshold of an era which will give the world many instructive books on the question of labor. If you want to serve humanity, first acquaint yourself with what the American labor movement means, first unlearn a great many errors that have undoubtedly taken root

## THE BOOKSELLERS' LEAGUE

in your minds, and then, as you take opportunity to distribute the books on the labor question you will find you have a call to do good to every household in the land. There is no reason why the wage earners in the booktrade should not co-operate with the wage earners in other trades.

The Rev. Thomas B. Gregory, who contributes a sermon each week to the Sunday *American*, the last speaker, urged booksellers to do all they can to promote the distribution of such literature as will make men and women realize their true greatness.

### THE TENTH ANNUAL MEETING

The tenth annual meeting was held at the Aldine Association on the evening of March 8. The Board of Managers reported that the membership, owing to the exertions of the members who desired to win the gold buttons awarded to those introducing five new members, had reached 180. The treasurer reported a balance of \$348.

The election resulted in the choice of Mr. Frederick D. Lacy as president. At a meeting of the Board of Managers the following were elected to support the president during his term: first vice-president, Samuel Reis; second vice-president, W. G. Preston; treasurer, E. G. Lawrence; secretary, Francis Gilman.

After the business meeting former Senator Burton, of Brooklyn, gave an interesting ad-



## TENTH YEAR

dress on the lights and shadows of legislative life, illustrated with a number of fitting stories.

The Booksellers' League during the first ten years of its existence gave eighty-seven entertainments, as follows: 26 "Smokers;" 33 Monthly Dinners; 9 Annual Dinners; 2 dinners in connection with the American Booksellers' Association to which members of the Booksellers' League were admitted free of charge; 3 Lectures; 4 Excursions; 3 Ladies' Nights; 1 Mock Auction; 3 Progressive Euchre Parties, and 3 Roll Calls.

The Employment Bureau, during the nine years that its affairs were looked after by its able manager, Mr. Charles E. Bonnell, secured for its members and others 474 situations. Inasmuch as a large proportion of those who obtain positions do not report back to Mr. Bonnell it is safe to assume that at least two hundred other positions were secured through the Employment Bureau though they cannot be accounted for.

The treasurer's accounts for the ten years show that the League received \$5455.78 and expended \$5128.91, leaving a balance on hand, on March 1, 1904, of \$326.87.

## THE BOOKSELLERS' LEAGUE

Our record of the work of the Booksellers' League draws to a close practically at its tenth year. We think we are not unduly enlarging on its work when we say that as an educating factor in the booktrade The Booksellers' League deserves the recognition of the heads of the houses who profit directly through the elevation of the standard of efficiency and the higher education of their clerks. The League has never asked for pecuniary assistance, and does not now; its managers simply suggest that in the large number of cases where clerks feel that their income will not permit them to associate themselves with the League, their employers might invest in memberships for their clerks, either as a reward of merit to their employees or in recognition and support of the good work the League is doing for the booktrade in general.

LIST OF OFFICERS, COMMITTEES  
AND MEMBERS



## OFFICERS OF THE BOOKSELLERS' LEAGUE.

### PRESIDENT,

Frederick D. Lacy, (G. P. Putnam's Sons,)  
27 W. Twenty-third Street.

### FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT,

Samuel Reis, (American Tract Society,)  
150 Nassau Street.

### SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT,

William G. Preston, (Dodd, Mead & Co.,)  
372 Fifth Avenue.

### SECRETARY,

Francis Gilman, (Charles Scribner's Sons,)  
153 Fifth Avenue.

### TREASURER,

Edward G. Lawrance, (E. S. Gorham,)  
285 Fourth Avenue.

### EMPLOYMENT BUREAU,

Charles E. Bonnell, (Bonnell, Silver & Co.,)  
48 W. Twenty-second Street.

## THE BOOKSELLERS' LEAGUE

### ENTERTAINMENT COMMITTEE,

T. E. Schulte, A. Wessels, F. Gilman, Myles Standish.

### FINANCE COMMITTEE,

Cass Richardson, Samuel Reis, J. B. Pratt,

C. L. Bowman.

### PRINTING COMMITTEE,

C. A. Burkhardt, E. G. Lawrance, W. G. Preston,

James MacDonald.

### MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE,

A. Growoll, E. B. Hackett, John A. Holden,

Alfred Harcourt.

### BOARD OF MANAGERS :

1906.	1907.	1908.
E. B. Hackett.	C. L. Bowman.	C. A. Burkhardt.
Alfred Harcourt.	C. E. Butler.	Francis Gilman.
John A. Holden.	Jas. MacDonald.	A. Growoll.
E. G. Lawrance.	S. F. McLean.	T. E. Schulte.
J. B. Pratt.	W. G. Preston.	Myles Standish.
Samuel Reis.	Cass Richardson.	A. Wessels.

## LIST OF MEMBERS

Adams, J. S.	Crane, A. M.	Gesner, J. G.
Adams, W. J. L.	Crombie, R. J.	Gilman, F.
Ahern, David P.	Crowell, T. I.	Giraldi, A.
Allen, E. W.	Cupples, V. M.	Gorenflo, E.
Anderson, J. R.	Curtis, J. J.	Green, W.
Arvidson, Karl.	Curtis, J. P.	Greene, Joseph F.
Barrett, T. A.	Cutter, C. F.	Grossett, A.
Barry, K. W.	Darling, W. V.	Growoll, A.
Blackwell, H.	Dawson, C. L.	Guggenheim, S.
Bonnell, C. E.*	Dengler, J. F.	Hackett, E. B.
Bowden, A. J.	Dick, A. B.	Hadley, W. B.
Bowman, C. L.	Dillingham, C. T.	Hafely, F. E.
Brackett, E. H.	Dingman, J. H.	Hanley, W.
Brainard, W. F.	Disney, A. E.	Harcourt, A.
Braunworth, C.	Dodd, W. F. C.	Harris, H. W.
Brett, G. P.	Doran, C. A.	Heacock, R. B.
Briggs, S. E.	Doubleday, F. N.	Henley, N.
Brightman, A. C.	Douglas, M.	Hesse, J. W.
Bristol, Robt. D.	Dressel, C. H.	Hill, J. C.
Buck, Francis T.	East, W. Palmer.	Hitchcock, F. H.
Burkhardt, C. A.	Eggers, J. H.	Holden, J. A.
Burkhardt, W. J.	Eiserman, G. E.	Hough, M. S.
Bush, W. C.	Emory, G. S.	Hoynes, H.
Bushong, J. R.	Erbe, L.	Hull, H.
Butler, C. B.	Etherington, W. F.	Hutchinson, H. S.
Butler, C. E.	Everitt, S. A.	Inglee, W. I.
Carson, S.	Fairbanks, T. N.	Irwin, F.
Cassott, A.	Fitch, A. C.	Jackel, H. L.
Chapman, E. O.	Fitzgerald, D.	Jackson, C. B.
Cole, G. W.	Fogal, A., Jr.	Jackson, H.
Cook, R. G.	Fox, R. K.	Jacobs, G. W.
Coombs, F. A.	Francis, J.	Kellogg, A. H.
Corrigan, J. W.	Gale, B. W.	Kelly, W. J.
Coryell, V. M.	Gauiard, G.	Ketcham, E. C.

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\* Honorary members.

## THE BOOKSELLERS' LEAGUE

Kiggins, H. G.	Nichols, J. W.	Standish, M.
Kimball, W. C.	Noel, L. de.	Steiger, E., Jr.
Lacy, F. D.	Nunan, T. F.	Stewart, J.
Lamothe, W. J.	Nye, D.	Stewart, W. A.
Lawrance, E. G.	O'Connell, D. J.	Stikeman, H.
Le Gallienne, R.*	Ogilvie, J. S.	Stolle, R. C.
Levinson, Samuel.	Osborn, J. H.	Stratton, A. D.*
Levy, E. H.	Page, L. C.	Sully, G.
Lichtenstein, C. B.	Page, W. H.	Swann, A.
Lillie, C. O.	Parker, W. H.*	Taylor, F. B.
Loweree, S. M.	Patterson, H. V.	Thompson, J. L.
McAfee, J. K.	Peabody, C. E.	Thompson, W.
McAfee, Robt.	Peck, J. R.	Tibbals, C. F.
McBride, J. S.	Pfister, F. J.	Tibbals, N. V.
Macdonald, J.	Pratt, J. B.	Todd, R. M.
McDonnell, E. J.	Preston, W. G.	Tooker, G. L.
McIntyre, J. W.	Price, G. V.	Turner, E. S.
Mackay, A. F.	Raff, W. C.	Van Saun, J. F.
McLean, S. F.	Reis, S.	Vogelius, J. F.
McSpadden, J. W.	Richardson, C.	Wagoner, H. V.
Madigan, P. F.	Ridings, H.	Walker, S. L.
Malkan, H.	Rock, E.	Washburn, K. N.
Marling, F. H.	Ronalds, H. J.	Watson, G. M.
Martin, D. W. C.	Schiff, E. M.	Watt, J.
Martin, G. C.	Schulte, T. L.	Watt, W. J.
Martin, R. A.	Schultz, H.	Weil, Louis.
Masterson, T. J.	Schumacher, H. A.	Welsh, C.
Mathews, H. B.	R.	Wessels, A.
May, C. H.	Seiler, A. G.	Wheelock, G. L.
Mendoza, I.	Sherwood, R. E.	Wild, J. W.
Montgomery, C. A.	Shoemaker, C. C.	Wilson, R. H.
Morrison, N. F.	Sirret, L. L.	Wood, W. H.
Murias, F. E. de.	Smith, A. B.	Worth, J.
Nelson, C. A.	Spinney, W. R.	Yates, C. W.
		Yates, F. D.

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\* Honorary members.



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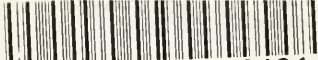
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